

"All the Questing and the Guessing": Arthur Hugh Clough as Proto- Modernist

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André Colwyn Prichard

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It is not sweet content, be sure,
That moves the nobler Muse to song,
Yet when could truth come whole and pure
From hearts that inly writhe with wrong?

It is not calm and peaceful breasts
That see or read the problem true;
They only know on whom 't has prest
Too hard to hope to solve it too.

Our ills are worse than at their ease
Mere blameless happy souls suspect;
They only study the disease,
Alas, who live not to detect.

Arthur Hugh Clough
"It is not sweet content, be sure"

Duty — that's to say complying
With what'er's expected here ...
With the form conforming duly,
Senseless what it meaneth truly ...
Duty — 'tis to take on trust
What things are good, and right, and just;
And whether indeed they be or be not,
Try not, test not, feel not, see not ...

'Tis the stern and prompt suppressing,
As an obvious deadly sin,
All the questing and the guessing
Of the soul's own soul within:
'Tis the coward acquiescence
In a destiny's behest,
To a shade by terror made,
Sacrificing, aye, the essence
Of all that's truest, noblest, blest:
'Tis the blind non-recognition
Either of goodness, truth, or beauty,
Except by precept and submission;
Moral blank, and moral void,
Life at very birth destroyed,
Atrophy, exinanition!
Duty! —
Yea, by duty's prime condition
Pure nonentity of duty!

Arthur Hugh Clough
"Duty — that's to say complying"

Abstract

In the almost one hundred and forty years since the death of Arthur Hugh Clough two assumptions have become more or less universally accepted in the criticism of the poet. The first is that he was an unmitigated failure, both as a man and a writer; the second, originating after about 1930, is that Clough anticipated some of the characteristics of twentieth-century Modernism. These generally unchallenged academic suppositions have, however, combined to restrict and deaden the opportunity for unrestrained speculation in Clough scholarship. Most recent work on Clough continues to promulgate both the idea of his difference and lack of success, and to impose, onto the man and his verse, an imprecise and narrow conception of his Modernism. This thesis intends to transcend both of these barriers by at once applying a more scrupulous and scholarly definition of Modernism to the poetry of Clough, and by illustrating the man who emerges through such an examination. By delineating Clough's dissatisfaction with the Victorian period and its poetic, and in the alternative philosophical and poetic stance which we see him assume, we are able to observe how Clough bids farewell to the stability afforded by Victorian retrospection and essentialism, and, in the process, develops a proto-Modernist fragmentation, prospectivity, and dynamism.

Introduction

The art of Arthur Hugh Clough represents dissatisfaction and struggle, but it is not the dissatisfaction and struggle that criticism has generally ascribed to the man. Rather than exemplify failure and weakness, as scholarship has maintained for over a century, Clough embodies a dissatisfaction with society's stagnant conformity and a struggle to destroy this and substitute something new and relevant in its place. His poetry does not aspire to be as Alfred Tennyson's or Matthew Arnold's, a fact which Clough's critics have had difficulty comprehending, but seeks, in its own right, to capture and confine the world that he individually perceives. Clough does not simply yearn to belong, nor does he hurtfully rail because he cannot be accommodated, but, through his poetry, expresses a genuine desire for change and betterment. Clough is a renovator and his poetry both describes and enacts his renovative vision.

In the untitled poem that begins "Duty — that's to say complying", Clough describes his discontent with the reversion and conformity of contemporary Victorian society. Subverting the common utilitarian doctrine of action only if it pleases the greatest number, Clough presents a contrary argument that is most concerned with personal autonomy, his own, and the role of the individual, himself. Parodying the language of Victorian culture and criticism, Clough takes the powerful connotations

of "moral" and collocates them with the terms "blank" and "void" (39). He attempts to erode the moral bedrock which underlies Victorian society. Clough asks what is "right, and just" (20), questioning "etiquette" (5), "precept" (38) and "duty" (1), kinship, truth and nobility. At the end of the poem he concludes that something fundamental, and potentially redemptive, is missing from society: "Life at very birth destroyed, / Atrophy, exinanition!" (40-41). His society is seen as a homicide, one that looms, waiting to take life as soon as it is given. This homicide operates by "Atrophy"; it slowly eats away at the body and the spirit until they are wasted and degenerate. "Exinanition" describes a process of exhaustion and personal emptying for the poet, one prompted by his "cannibalistic" society. Angered most of all by the opportunity for speculation and discovery that is either misplaced or misdirected by his contemporaries, Clough laments the conformity — the intellectual and spiritual authoritarianism — that characterises Victorian utilitarianism. Clough sees in the Victorians' rigid prescription of thought and action a disease that threatens to destroy all capacity for individual agency in society. He uses the line "All the questing and the guessing" (29) from this poem (which I have taken as the title of my thesis) both ironically, to criticise the unilluminating and ill-directed mode of inquiry common among his peers, and literally, to indicate the very different philosophical journey which he is to undertake subsequently, and in his poetry. In this phrase Clough both connotes the worthlessness and fragility of the Victorian quest for precise moral values — it is little more than a hopeful "guess" — and suggests that a divergent path must be taken if the key that would yield the voice of the real world to humanity and to poetry is to be uncovered. Like the medieval alchemist, Clough must experiment if he is to unearth the ingredient which would realise his philosophical and poetic vision. His verse enacts this search.

To Clough, his society is distinguished by misguidance and conceit. In an essay entitled "Letters of Parepidemus, Number One" Clough continues where "Duty — that's to say complying" left off. Here he explicitly reproaches Victorian political endeavour:

And the whole Anglo-Saxon world of the future will, it is greatly to be feared, go forth upon its way, clearing forests, building clippers, weaving calicoes, and annexing Mexicos, accomplishing its manifest destiny, and subsiding into its primitive aboriginal ignorance.

(Prose Works 180)

Clough again betrays a deep disillusionment with the actions and conventions of his society. Commercial greed, rampant industrial expansion, and political conquest are all present in this quotation. Clough embeds his sense of a heedless and misdirected society in a few selective, but powerful, cultural symbols. These emblems at once denote English Imperialism, Mercantilism and Industrialism, while at the same time functioning as a compound symbol for an England that is seen, by Clough, to be negligently pursuing a perilous and deleterious path. In the numerous national and international crises in which Great Britain became embroiled during the middle part of the nineteenth century Clough sees tangible evidence of the nation's hazardous course. He is prepared to acknowledge the danger and caprice that lie beneath the surface of civilisation and, almost uniquely, to give a voice to this peril. While others, such as Arnold, are also able to perceive some of the disquiet in society, Clough is one of the few who both incorporates and animates it in his verse. Whereas Arnold attempts to suppress, through the construction of certain cultural and moral absolutes, the inconstancy which characterises Victorian society, a few others are able, like Clough, to begin to embrace it. William

Barnes, D. G. Rossetti, A. C. Swinburne and Gerard Manley Hopkins are regarded by criticism as the most notable of these. Clough fully embraces the artistic impetus which they similarly began to recognise. He is by far the best English exemplar of an artistic impulse that began to appear simultaneously in the major centres of Western civilisation around 1850,¹ and that can be described as proto-Modernist.

Clough was able to formulate such a distinctive poetic voice and vision because the world that he comprehended was somewhat different from that of his peers. The sociological momentum which eventually created High Modernism began with the widespread industrialism and political and social agitation of the early to middle part of the nineteenth century. Clough prematurely sensed the characteristics of instability, distress and alienation to which this new, post-Romantic world lent itself. He experienced a comparatively early awareness of the explosion of the stabilities and structures of traditional European society comparable with that of the writers and artists of the early twentieth century. Theirs were worlds that possessed many common elements: of change, inconstancy, variance and caprice. Just as it was the "shock", as the Modernists themselves described it, of the First World War which most completely signalled the collapse of Western civilisation for them, so for Clough it was the agnosticism which Tractarianism prompted in him and the experience of war which he found while in Europe during the Liberal revolutions of 1848-49. Clough endured key moments of personal and cultural disintegration which presaged those of the Modernists. These forced him to reconsider, and to remake, the world that he found in poetry. Clough both appropriated and animated the cracks that he saw beginning to appear in the surface of civilisation. Rather than suppress them, he sought to actuate and record them.

In examining various aspects of Clough's proto-Modernism this thesis intends to illustrate just how precisely and remarkably Clough's personal philosophy and poetic

praxis anticipate those of the Modernists. Like the Modernists, Clough felt that his world had to be "made new" if it were to survive the challenges imposed by the new and capricious order. In my initial chapter, I will attempt something similar to Clough. The outmoded suppositions which have both restricted and deadened Clough scholarship will be examined so that their prejudices may be uncovered and dismantled. Throughout, this chapter seeks to convey the extent to which Clough has been either maligned or misunderstood by the majority of the critics who have dealt with him, whilst also attempting to outline a definite and distinctive position for my own views amongst them. From here, Clough and his poetry and prose will be examined as documentary evidence of the innovative, proto-Modernist ideas to which he subscribed. The first part of my second chapter, like my initial chapter, can be seen as an empowering project which both releases Clough (and myself) from the bias of previous generations, and shows him endeavouring to undermine his present and create and articulate something new and innovative for the future. My subsequent chapters will illustrate and exemplify the major ways in which he does this. In part two of my second chapter, Clough's uniquely proto-Modernist relationship with the past will be viewed in the complex poetic structure which he adapts in order to engage with this past. In the next section, which examines Clough's poetic practice itself, the points at which his praxis meets with, and presages, the notions and concepts which underpin literary Modernism will be highlighted. Finally, Clough and several of his most important protagonists will be looked at as precursive exemplars of Modernist alienation and of a distinctively twentieth-century view of the self. Throughout, a manifold selection of Clough's poems will be examined, with particular attention being paid to those which repeatedly anticipate Modernism. Before this thesis tackles the poems and their problems, however, it must first examine the mire of criticism in which they remain submerged.

Chapter 1

Clough: The Critical Inheritance

In November 1848 Arthur Hugh Clough published his first volume of poetry, a single "long vacation pastoral" entitled *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*.² He followed this, two months later, with the publication of *Ambarvalia*, a collection of thirty short poems, produced together with a similar-sized selection from Thomas Burbidge. Thereafter nothing more of Clough's poetry was published in Great Britain for twelve years, until shortly after his death. In the meantime, in the United States, Clough's work had also become available. Indeed it was there, in 1858, that Clough chose to distribute the only other of his poems to be openly published during his lifetime, when, between February and May, *The Atlantic Monthly* carried "Amours de Voyage". Besides some juvenilia from *Rugby Magazine*, and the odd, anonymous poem that was circulated in some lesser journal, of which there were only six, this scant selection represents all that Clough allowed to be published during his lifetime. Why, we are impelled to ask, did so little of Clough's verse appear while he was still alive? Why, after an initial flourish, did Clough's public output so dramatically dry up and his attention shift a continent, to the American literary scene?

These questions are imperative to our understanding of Clough's unique position within Victorian literature.

As he left England for the Carolinas before his first birthday, lived the next seven years of his life in Charleston, and chose to return to the United States between 1852 and '53, Clough's relationship with America was always a close one. Because it was a comparatively young country — a society that was inherently hopeful and optimistic and necessarily open and outward looking —³ America seems to embody, for Clough, a freedom from expectation and prejudice that he was unable to find in Great Britain. It was for this reason that he chose to publish "Amours de Voyage" in Boston. The United States appears to emblematises for Clough an escape that is antithetical to the constraints and pressures which criticism suggests he found, both personally and poetically, in England. Clough's poetry gained supporters among the free-thinking American literary establishment that it could not among the more traditional and narrow-minded English. (It is no coincidence that, later, many of Modernism's foremost innovators came from this young and extraspective country.)

Ralph Waldo Emerson, discussing *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* in a letter to Clough, writes: "how could I know or guess that you had all this wealth of expression, this wealth of imagery, this joyful heart of youth, this temperate continuity, that belongs only to high masters?" (1 232-233) Even a later Romantic like Henry Longfellow praises the poem for its "genial wit, the truth to nature, and the extreme beauty of various passages and figures" (Emerson 1 232-233), and Emerson alludes to James Russell Lowell's affirmation of Clough's "very high order of [poetic] merit" (1 232-233). Of the many responses to Clough's poetry that appeared during his lifetime it is almost exclusively the American that are so positive, open-minded and receptive. They seem to recognise better the departures and innovations that Clough's verse attempts, less shaped, as they are, by old methodologies and entrenched beliefs.

That Clough chose to publish nothing in Great Britain during the last, and most productive, years of his life is significant. This fact is indicative of a personal disillusionment, a lack of self-confidence, that almost certainly derives from Clough's misunderstanding and subsequent ridicule by most of his English commentators. Rather than risk criticism and contempt, Clough appears to have chosen to remain safe and silent. To the English Clough seemed to defy many of the expectations of Victorian life and art.

Always spoken in a voice both unique and unconventional for its time, Clough's poetry represents the sort of disorder, the sort of cultural, moral and mental anarchy, that much Victorian endeavour sought to overcome. Clough seemed to embody many of the traits that the Victorians saw as disagreeable: difference, weakness, uncertainty, failure and moral dissension. While his religious agnosticism is not unique — Arnold and others explore its possibility in some of their poems — ⁴ Clough dealt with this doubt openly and honestly. He appeared to lack the moral fortitude which Arnold, in *Culture and Anarchy*, implies is the best medicine for an ailing individual within society. Clough was seen by most to have succumbed to his doubt, to the despair in his soul. Against the broad mid-nineteenth-century poetic trend of lyricism, the celebration of emotion and a relative plainness of diction — presented particularly by Arnold, as the great formulator of Victorian taste, author of the 1853 "Preface" and later Professor of Poetry at Oxford — Clough was regarded as something of an exception and an oddity.

Having been best friends at Rugby and Oxford, Clough and Arnold, in their maturity, came to embody two very different manners of thought. Arnold came to symbolise Victorian constancy and high-mindedness, Clough, something distinctive and entirely different. As both struggled with the question of the true nature and agency of the modern poet, trying to formulate an apposite poetic with which to capture

the character of the new epoch, each reached very different conclusions.⁵ Matthew Arnold, in the "Preface" to his 1853 edition of *Poems*, presents a poetic theory that at once illustrates and defines his antagonism with Clough.

Believing that the great works of antiquity and of Shakespeare represent a universal and relevant poetic ideal, Arnold chastises one critic's view that "the poet ... [should] draw his subject from matters of present import" (*Poetry and Prose* 105). Clough, more than any of his contemporaries, uses the state of the modern world as a source of constant poetic inspiration. Arnold appeals for a poetry of inclusive and ubiquitous comprehensiveness, that, depicting familiar inner feeling, is openly and widely accessible. Clough, however, uses his own struggles, those of a man ill at ease in a new and rapidly changing world, as a relevant poetic subject. His poetry is consequently often harsh, personal and densely allusive. Arnold chooses to deal with this modern instability by erecting in poetry "boundaries and wholesome regulative laws" (*Poetry and Prose* 117). Conversely, Clough takes the innate chaos of the universe and the tumult of his day as a model for a poetic structure that is far less rigorous and more random than that of his peers. He seeks to animate the capricious modern world in poetry. Such a tension, such a divergence of purpose, created a rift between the two poets that was founded as much on rivalry as it was on mutual misunderstanding.

Using his own poetic principles, Arnold, not surprisingly, discerned a "deficiency of the beautiful" (*Letters to Clough* 66), an unnaturalness and lack of art, in Clough's verse. He objected to the "want of substance, shape, and colour" and the "morbid self-consciousness" in *Ambarvalia* (qtd. in Thorpe 81-82). Quite portentously, Arnold expressed a concern that Clough's poems "may not be quite right and calculated to suit others" (*Letters to Clough* 86), warning that "... rare as individuality is you have to be on your guard against it" (*Letters to Clough* 63). Speaking of a man so apparently out

of step with his time, Arnold exasperatedly rails at Clough that "you are as obscure as life is" (*Letters to Clough* 63). A representative of Victorian learning and taste, Arnold personifies an intellectual establishment that is unable to recognise Clough's significance until well into our own century.

Most Victorian criticism of Clough echoes Arnold's view.⁶ James Froude, in a letter to Clough, lists many flaws in both *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* and *Ambarvalia*, and, while not wholly negative, ends "... I do not think them [the poems] perfect. They will take a deal of shaping and polishing, and they are such hard stone that they will bear it" (qtd. in Thorpe 36). In a review of *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*, included in the Pre-Raphaelite magazine *The Germ*, its author, William Rossetti, is often critical of Clough's poem. While drawn by its beauty and "strength and completeness" (qtd. in Thorpe 56), Rossetti is nonetheless censorious of its unusual content, its metrical experiments and its unstudied writing, concluding that its style is "without special prominence" (qtd. in Thorpe 64). Another contemporary reviewer, William Whewell, objects to Clough's "uncouth" versification (qtd. in Thorpe 66) and "wanton rudeness of execution" (qtd. in Thorpe 68). Elizabeth Barrett Browning, having spoken of the new generation of British poets and of Clough in particular, insists that "none of these are artists [*sic*]" (1 429). Edward Quillinan, Charles Kingsley, reviewers in the *Spectator*, *Literary Gazette* and *Guardian* alike, all reproach Clough's poetry in the same way. Francis Palgrave, in his preface to *The Poems of Arthur Hugh Clough* (1862), sums up the commonly held view of Clough's art when he states that "the language and thought are often unequal and incomplete; the poetical fusion into a harmonious whole, imperfect. Here, and in his other writing, one feels a doubt as to whether in verse he chose the right vehicle, the truly natural mode of utterance" (xi).

This overwhelmingly negative response suggests that Clough failed to subscribe to something that the Victorians saw as intrinsic to poetry. He seems to offend many

expectations of what a poem should be and how it should sound, defying their conception of poetic decorum. This study suggests that Clough prompted this response from his peers largely because what he was attempting was to portray a more rapid and real world than that seen in most other Victorian poetry. Clough was striving to find some way in which to express, rather than suppress, modern change and locomotion. However, in an effort to explain Clough's difference, his perceived dissension, it became current in Victorian criticism to cite his troubled biography, to tar his poetry with the brush of a famous failure.

As a boy at Rugby, Clough was regarded as brilliant and outstanding. Its eminent headmaster, Dr. Thomas Arnold, bestowed almost every available school prize upon the young man. Expected to succeed similarly at Oxford, Clough failed to gain a "First" in 1841 and consequently lost his chance of a Balliol College fellowship. Eventually elected by Oriel College, he spent several unfruitful years there until his resignation in 1848. A position as Principal of University Hall, London, was relinquished after only a few years, in December 1851. Clough subsequently took a laborious job as an Examiner in the National Education Office, and it was while on sick leave from this position that he died, in February 1861. A victim of malarial fever, Clough was seen, as many then thought, to have succumbed to his wasted life.

Such a seemingly lamentable biography, well known to the clique of influential English critics and intellectuals with whom Clough associated, lies at the heart of Clough's misapprehension by others, and remained an obstacle in criticism until relatively recently. The Victorian critics, for the most part, allowed this to cloud their judgment and consequently were unable to recognise the qualities of uniqueness and innovation which make Clough's work so important. They found in Clough's "failure" the hypostasis with which to dismiss his renovation as eccentricity, and thereby to redeem and safeguard their own literary practice

and pre-eminence. This trend became popular, ironically, with a poem meant to commemorate Clough's successes in life and the enduring qualities of his art.

Matthew Arnold's poetic elegy to Clough, "Thyrsis", perhaps did more harm to Clough's reputation than anything else. Because of Arnold's canonicity, for many readers it remains all that they know of the man that is the poem's subject. In phrases such as "It irk'd him to be here" (41), "too quick despairer" (61), and "men esteem'd thee feeble" (214), Clough's failure has been consecrated. Of his life, and unusual and unlauded poetry, Arnold chides:

Some life of men unblest
He knew, which made him droop, and fill'd his head.
He went; his piping took a troubled sound
Of storms that rage outside our happy ground;
He could not wait their passing, he is dead.

(46-50)

Clough is depicted as a harbinger of chaos and disorder, a representative of dangerous malcontentedness in an otherwise "happy ground". Cursed, "unblest", he is shown surrendering to his melancholy difference and discord, his despair. Pushed by society in one direction, pulled by his own inquisitiveness and compulsion in another, Clough's verse pipes "a troubled sound" because the society that he comprehends and subsequently animates is somewhat different from that which his contemporaries, such as Arnold, experienced. In many ways the difficult relationship which existed between Clough and Arnold, that lasted from boyhood and that is recorded here, persists, in the way that criticism treats these two figures, even today.

Much of Clough's stigmatisation has lain in the way in which he and Arnold are compared, with a view to showing how two men of such esteemed ability and from such similar

backgrounds could take entirely divergent paths when confronted with the realities of life. Needless to say, this comparison seldom, if ever, seems to favour Clough. In an unsigned article in the *Saturday Review*, for example, the writer states that Clough "was vastly his [Arnold's] inferior in poetical and critical faculty and in power of work; his inferior also immensely in appreciation of the joy of living, in wit and in flexibility" (qtd. in Thorpe 334). Later, Lionel Johnson in *Academy* contrasts Clough's "decay" with Arnold's "lofty humanism" and poetic refinement (qtd. in Thorpe 339). With his death it appears that Clough also lost his humanity, soon becoming a one-dimensional symbol of despair, misfortune and ruin within the critical imagination. Nevertheless curiosity, if not admiration, remained for this perceived human oddity.

As often happens with a poet's death, when attention suddenly refocuses back onto the achievements of that poet's life and art, interest in Clough's poetry experienced something of a resurgence after his passing in 1861. Within a year of his death two separate editions of *The Poems of Arthur Hugh Clough* were issued, one in Great Britain under the editorship of Francis Palgrave, the other in the United States and edited by Charles Norton. At this time, too, Clough's widow, Blanche Smith Clough, was beginning the task of collecting and sorting the many writings which her husband had left behind him. In 1865 these were ready for private circulation, and in 1869 were published by Macmillan of London as *The Poems and Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough*. Incorporating a memoir by Blanche herself, Clough's lectures, other prose and all of the poems and poetic fragments that survived, this volume remained the definitive Clough collection until Oxford University Press's publication of his poems and correspondence, separately, in the 1950s. Involving such eminent Victorian scholars as Howard Lowry, A. L. P. Norrington and Frederick Mulhauser, the production of the Oxford editions of Clough's work coincides with the most intense period of activity in Clough studies since his death.

While both the 1860s and the 1960s yield a comparatively large amount of criticism concerning the poet, very little in the way of a major re-evaluation of Clough's work occurred at these times.

Shortly after his death critics were already lamenting Clough's "wasted genius", "unfulfilled purpose" and "disappointed life" (Symonds 589). Palgrave's memoir to the 1862 edition of *The Poems of Arthur Hugh Clough* describes his subject's life in terms of "months ... of darkness" and "years of struggle and toil". His account is punctuated with emotive phrases which recount "little prosperity", "no fame or recognition" and "fightings within and without" (v-xxiv). A. C. Swinburne promulgates an extreme, but not uncommon, viewpoint when he writes that:

Literary history will hardly care or remember to register
the fact that there was a bad poet named Clough

whom his friends found it useless to puff
for the public if dull
has not quite such a skull
as belongs to believers in Clough.

(V 283)

A notorious scandaliser, and here discarding prose and breaking off into a derisive and simple limerick, Swinburne nevertheless makes a judgment of Clough not uncommon to the later part of the nineteenth or the early twentieth centuries. Throughout this period no serious literary comment on Clough was forthcoming. The academic establishment was, if anything, even more narrow-minded and dismissive than before. That between 1900 and 1930 only two editions of Clough's poems appeared (Houghton *Poetry of Clough* 21) reveals just how unpopular his poetry remained.⁷

Rather than being discovered and celebrated, as we might have expected of a proto-Modernist innovator at the height of

Modernism's pre-eminence, between about 1910 and 1930, Clough was again misapprehended. Discredited and glossed over, along with his Victorian contemporaries, Clough became yet another symbol of an antiquated and repressive epoch. The idea of Clough's failure again preponderates, except that, at this time, Clough is not seen as an unsuccessful exception to a proud and productive era, but rather as the rule. Clough becomes an archetype of all that is wrong with Victorian society. His failure, despondency and premature death are seen as the inevitable result of an age that was as self-regulating, self-conscious and, ultimately, self-destructive as the Victorian. While very little criticism at all exists from this period, and what does is usually of a rather dubious quality, undoubtedly the most famous belongs to Lytton Strachey.

In *Eminent Victorians*, the book in which Strachey attempts to erase the prestige of the Victorian era and, in the process, make room for the Modernist endeavour, a very sad Arthur Hugh Clough appears. Convinced of the idea of Clough's failure, Strachey writes that "ever since he had lost his faith at the time of the Oxford Movement" (98) Clough had "spent the rest of his existence lamenting that loss, both in prose and in verse ... [until he] eventually succumbed, conscientiously doing up brown paper parcels for Florence Nightingale" (127). Suggesting that his death deprived the world of nothing more than an exceptional parcel-tying ability, Strachey uses Clough to deride Victorian philanthropy and high moralism.

Elsewhere, during this period, some less political but equally ill-informed criticism was current. John Drinkwater, in his book *Victorian Poetry*, devotes a single line to Clough's apathy in a chapter incongruously titled "Some Tennysonians" (84). Clough's centenary in 1919 produced a little work, and in J. I. Osborne's biography the finest of this time. Although Osborne feels the need to qualify his praise with some conventional descriptions of Clough's failure, his defence of Clough's life remains convincing if, for the time, rather atypical. Osborne's frequently positive and perceptive

analysis, however, like that of an early twentieth-century reviewer who called Clough a "great poet" (qtd. in Thorpe 384), is a precursor to a changing attitude that becomes even more prevalent in Clough criticism as the century progresses.

As Modernism began to wane and the Auden generation came to the fore, around 1930, a new direction in Clough scholarship also emerged. This new direction was first evinced by Desmond MacCarthy's essay on Clough, published in 1931. Thereafter it became no longer necessary to chastise Clough for what for eighty years had been perceived as his frailties and failings. Amidst the persistent post-First World War atmosphere of celebration and freedom, Desmond MacCarthy spoke of Clough's constancy and commitment to a life not fashioned by prevailing poetic trends (65-66). The following year Humbert Wolfe presented Clough as a satirical genius and freed him from the stigma of being a "shadowy Pierrot of a scholar-gipsy" (43) as Arnold portrayed him in "Thyrsis". Howard Lowry, in 1932 also, praised Clough's energetic mind and passion for life. Throughout the 1930s critics such as H.W. Garrod, Patric Dickinson and John Heath-Stubbs continued to enhance Clough's reputation. In 1938 Goldie Levy published a biography of Clough that incorporated this new academic momentum. With the critics of the 1930s also, with their benefit of hindsight, originated the conception of Clough's early Modernism, an idea first widely disseminated in the introduction to Faber's inaugural anthology of modern verse, edited by Michael Roberts.

Here Roberts notes the resemblance of Clough's poems "to Mr. Pound's *Cantos*, in tone and intention ... and there is the same detachment, the same denial of commonly-accepted responsibility that is found in *Mauberley* and *Prufrock*" (12). Referring to the French Symbolist poets, the great nineteenth-century antecedents of literary Modernism, Roberts finds in Clough an "introspection" and "self-mockery", a "dissatisfaction with ready-made analysis, and the same intense conviction that there is an underlying problem" (13), that can be found

in the poetry of Jules Laforgue. While these similarities are certainly sustainable, it is to the ideas and images of T. S. Eliot's verse that this thesis will most often compare Clough. Although Roberts is often commendably perceptive, as he is here, he still cannot escape completely the half-truths of the past.

When Roberts states that "Clough suspected that the malaise was due to a fault in himself" (14), referring to Clough's disquiet at a mutable and inconstant world, we can see these prejudices begin to surface. Here Roberts betrays a susceptibility to the hackneyed image of Clough as an unhappy and unfortunate misfit. He posits an unhelpful association between poet and persona which Clough's biographical critics long ago wore out. While Clough undoubtedly perceived and experienced the world very differently from most of his contemporaries, only seldom did he attribute the faults of his society to a weakness in himself. Rather, Clough possessed a unique poetic vision, of which he was fully conscious and that he would most sharply assert in his satiric verse. Although he struggled to adapt to the new order that he discerned, as a dissenting voice in a regulated and self-assured society, he never surrendered to the temptation of blaming himself for the folly of others.

The method of analysis which Roberts uses to make his revolutionary point has, however, become something of an encumbrance to a more illuminating and profound exploration of Clough's Modernism subsequently. Roberts' is a mode of investigation that is both imprecise and outmoded, reliant for its "meaning", as it is, on implication and suggestion. He exemplifies what Oscar Wilde, in his essay "The Critic as Artist", describes as "Criticism ... [that employs] any low standard of imitation or resemblance" (24). Roberts examines the various nuances of Clough's tone and intention, listening for his anticipation of the reverberating echo of others, rather than the crispness of his own inventive, proto-Modernist voice. Positing simple and vague similarities between Clough

and the Modernists, as he does, without creating an exact intellectual framework in which to set them, failing to plumb the depths of Clough's philosophical or poetic Modernism, and refusing to define his terms of reference within Modernist discourse, Roberts' inaccurate and superficial critical method has regrettably preponderated through to today. Included among its practitioners are the influential Clough critics of the 1960s.

With the explosion of Clough scholarship which the re-evaluation of the '30s precipitated came a flurry of commonly revisionist articles and, between 1962 and 1972, no fewer than eight major book-length studies of the man. However, just as Clough's failure became a standard critical assumption before the 1930s, and one that persisted in some form throughout this period as well, so it became standard to assume Clough's anticipation of Modernism. Like the conception of Clough's failure, Clough's Modernism too came to have a similarly deadening and restrictive effect upon the ideal of fresh and evaluative literary criticism.

Isobel Armstrong's short work, *Arthur Hugh Clough*, and Katherine Chorley's major biography of Clough, both issued in 1962, fell into just such a trap. Chorley, for example, writes that "Clough became weary of the search [for truth and sense in his time] and abandoned it" (360). She thereby perpetuates his failure myth, viewing Clough's poetry simply in terms of it. In this passage she also implies that Clough was unaware of the poetic innovations which he was enacting, concluding that they were unsuccessful and were eventually forsaken. Subscribing to the mythologies that surround Clough's life and art, Chorley limits the scope of her investigation and substitutes nothing new and redemptive in its place.

Another widely read modern critic, W. E. Houghton, published, in 1963, *The Poetry of Clough: An Essay in Revaluation*. Here Houghton conducts his study with great skill and insight, and comprehensively examines the relationship of Clough to his time, but he too remains bogged

down in the stagnant and outmoded suppositions of the academy. His work is less "an essay in revaluation" than a confirmation of entrenched assumptions. Houghton concludes that "nonetheless, like his own Dipsychus, he [Clough] submitted to the [worldly temptations of his] Spirit" (210). Houghton again confuses Clough the man with his poetic personae, here identifying him with the hero of his poem "Dipsychus". By concealing Clough beneath the mythologies of his biography, Houghton serves only to diminish the real achievements of the poet.

In the same year, Michael Timko attempts to revise the revision by producing, in part, an examination of Clough's Victorianism. However, by asserting that "Clough was more a Victorian than a modern" (7), he merely reiterates what is an obvious and immutable fact. As the semi-ironic title of his book — *Innocent Victorian* — illustrates, Timko may be aware of the popular critical image of Clough but he is unable to avoid it. Rather, in his delineation of Clough's physical exclusion from Victorian social life, he perpetuates it. Timko blunts his argument by ignoring the destructive intent of Clough's satire, a symptom of his growing dissatisfaction with the Victorian period and its poetic. He also, and in spite of his overt rejection of Clough's Modernism earlier, cannot resist comparing Clough's verse with T. S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock".

In 1969 David Williams continued the resurgent trend. However, as his book title, borrowed from "Thyrsis" — *"Too Quick Despairer": The Life and Work of Arthur Hugh Clough* — suggests, Williams again misrepresents Clough through his adherence to the traditional myth of Clough's failure. In an unusual and, arguably, unscholarly way, Williams begins his book by fictionalising a portion of Clough's life. In the way he presents Clough and his associates, Williams' latent prejudices concerning the poet's uncertainty and weakness are evident. When examining aspects of Clough's Modernism also, Williams shows little more depth. "Clough's predominant mood and

attitude chime with this feeling which we are familiar with" (152), he writes. Williams sees Clough's Modernism not so much as a poetic trait, but as a personal one. It was simply because Clough was sexually frank, spiritually uncommitted and morally self-prescribing that he was modern, he suggests. Regrettably, he is not the only one to use attitude rather than philosophical or poetic practice to describe Clough's literary Modernism. Williams' major conclusion is the rather bland assertion that Clough achieved a unique "equilibrium between thought and style" (153) when this is surely true of any major poet.

Barbara Hardy, as the author of one of two essays on Clough included in Isobel Armstrong's 1969 edition of *The Major Victorian Poets: Reconsiderations*, also exemplifies this new vitality in Clough scholarship. That Clough is now placed in a book of "major Victorian poets" shows just how far he has come since the lampooning he suffered during the early part of the century. Although Hardy presents an innovative analysis of "Dipsychus" based on the literary theory of James Joyce, her assertions are not always sustainable. She, like Roberts, Chorley and Williams before her, distances Clough from a wider and more scrupulous version of Modernism. When Hardy writes that Clough was "visibly imprisoned in his Victorianism" (253), she herself imprisons Clough in a stereotype of difference and despair. She enacts a subconscious deauthenticating of Clough's life and voice which is common to all of the critics of this period.

In her 1970 study, Evelyn Greenburger sets out to trace the source of Clough's disillusionment to failed political idealism. The American critic, D. J. Enright, portrays Clough as a proponent of free speech and open speculation within a repressive and almost totalitarian age in his book "*A Kidnapped Child of Heaven*": *The Poetry of Arthur Hugh Clough*. In 1972, Rhabindra Biswas published a massive, but conventional, biography of Clough. That almost half of the book-length examinations of Clough take the form of critical

biography betrays the disproportionate significance which Clough's life has assumed among commentators, and when analysing his art.

Recently, however, the number of journal articles which attempt to rectify the weaknesses inherent in much previous Clough criticism have increased. They have sought to take the long overdue and necessary step of banishing the limitations of biography from the study of Clough's poetry. The current generation of Clough critics have found this an easier undertaking, in the wake of post-structuralism, and have subsequently attempted to implement more innovative and abstract methods of analysis.

Patrick Grieg Scott makes a convincing defence of Clough's Victorian characteristics in "The Victorianism of Clough", illuminating many of the critical prejudices which have gone before him. Scott writes of Michael Roberts, for example, that he "asserted the connection [between Clough and the Modernists] rather than proving it" (33). However, his defence has its own failings. In his article, Scott attempts to describe how Clough was typical of his epoch, despite the complete lack of understanding which this thesis has so far shown the Victorians had of him. Scott is forced to subvert his argument in order to sustain this viewpoint. He skews his definition of the Victorian poetic, making Clough's verse, which he freely admits exemplifies "the poetry of fragmentation" (42), somehow reminiscent of that of Clough's contemporaries. In neither Tennyson nor Arnold do we see the same inherent and overwhelming tensions, the same volatile powder-keg, which Clough's verse often contains. While Scott contends that "the 'modernist' label encourages an over-selective approach to Clough's poetry" (41), I believe that is one which, if used correctly, opens up vast and significant possibilities for the reader, freeing Clough of the tyranny of his hypostases. The persistence of analyses of Clough's Modernism in current criticism suggests that Scott's

view is far from universal and that the potential of this area remains far from exhausted.

Both James R. Locke and Paul Murray, in recent articles, find in the poetry of T. S. Eliot evidence of Eliot having read, and probably appropriated components of, Clough's verse. In the former, "Amours de Voyage" is posited as a possible source for "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" and, in the latter, Clough is suggested as the model for the unidentified ghost in the "East Coker" section of *Four Quartets*. The erudition of writers such as Eliot however makes this only a plausible, and so far stubbornly unproveable, academic assertion. Robert Johnson, Paul Dean and R. A. Forsyth are among the many modern commentators who have sought to re-examine the notion of Clough's Modernism in the last two decades. In each case, their conclusions have been the same; each is at least capable of superficially recognising the Modernist innovations of the poet. Frederick Bowers' article, "Arthur Hugh Clough: The Modern Mind", however, takes Clough's Modernism a step further, and it is this work that my study seeks to move beyond.

In his essay, Bowers makes many interesting and germane points regarding Clough's anticipation of the Modernist sentiment, incorporating, for one of the few times, precise elements of Modernist poetic practice. The fastidious style, the foregrounding of intellect and the eclectic image are all here, for example. Nevertheless, in some ways, his article falls short. Like Roberts, Bowers remains most concerned with Clough's "style and tone", his "distinctly modern ring" (711) as he puts it. With such terminological obfuscation, Bowers' study often regresses into a vague positing of samenesses and similarities. Bowers makes a promising start, but frequently repeats the critical mistakes of the past. It is in the rejection of such echoes and nuances, such a variance of tone and intention, and in their replacement by the scrupulous application of Modernist literary theory, and comparison with

the specific Modernist text,⁸ that this thesis attempts to break new ground in the study of Clough's poetry.

Chapter 2

The Treatment of the Past

Renovation and the Destructive Impulse of Satire

The Modernist text typically expresses a deeply ambivalent attitude towards the past. Much of the past is regarded with longing and admiration, but still more is seen with horror and disdain. The future is greeted with excitement and vigour, but also with a sense of fear and trepidation. As several commentators have noted, Modernism at once represents a final, desperate attempt to preserve the precepts of centuries of secular Humanism, the movement which elevated man and reason above God and faith, and a need to radically reformulate these in the face of a powerful current of revolutionary intellectual development. Modernism presents this historical equivocalness, its contradictory impulse to change but remain, in the way that it simultaneously distances itself from, and embraces, the past. In *The Origins of Modernism: Eliot, Pound, Yeats and the Rhetorics of Renewal*, Stan Smith delineates the philosophical

stance which underpins this process of concomitant rejection, and restoration, within the Modernist imagination.

For the Modernist author "a total up-to-dateness has to be combined with a training in the classics" (3), Smith writes. "Originality must be matched by a sense of origins" (3). It is only then, he asserts, that the Modernist writer may successfully move beyond them. Modernism seeks to incorporate and reanimate the vast and timeless literary mythologies, the scaffold of innumerable forms, subjects, texts and authors which constitute our artistic inheritance, in order to at once remake, and transcend, them. Exemplifying Harold Bloom's schematic representation of literary history through the interplay of influence, confluence and agon,⁹ the Modernist author both seizes and welcomes, and remodels and reinvents, the past. The ubiquitous events of our cultural history remain the Modernist author's subject, and its portrayal his or her motivation, but by "modernising" the techniques by which the past is presented history is made more relevant and reflective of his or her time. The Modernist artist is aware simultaneously of his or her own departure from literary tradition and, paradoxically, of the way in which he or she can never completely escape from it. In having constantly to remind us of their difference, ironically, the writers of the Modernist movement serve only to foreground the past which they seek to occlude.

Literature and language are able simultaneously to preserve and transcend the weight of our cultural history because, as many modern textual theorists and Mikhail Bakhtin in particular have noted, words "come to any speaker or writer marked by their previous and anticipated uses" (Sim 22). They are characterised by a continuity, but also possess a prospective potentiality. When Bakhtin suggests that "words are marked with plural meanings because they never belong wholly to one speaker or to one context; they are marked by traces of dialogic activity" (Sim 22), he describes the way in which influence in language functions. The term "dialogic

activity", for Bakhtin, encompasses a cultural-historic semiotic, one delineating the path of language across space and through time. This process is something which the Modernist author enacts. Bakhtin further elaborates what is a Modernist poetic precept by positing the idea that language is "inscribed with historically accumulated forms of prestige and authority which ... [are] both asserted and resisted" (Sim 22). These ideas denote the posture towards the past which the Modernists assume, reflecting their attitude to language and authority, and describing the motivation which underpins their wish to reinvent. Stan Smith insists that the Modernists' "originality, in Valéry's terms, lies not in suppressing the texts they network, but in concealing the way such operations transform the traditional concept of 'influence', by making influence itself, the inflowing of sources, their central thematic" (6). Modernism is characterised not by a severance from history, but by a dialogue with it. By its trans-historical nature, and in its polyphony and heterogeneity, the Modernist text betrays its suffusion in the past. In this way, a "pattern of timeless moments" (Smith 13) is created, and a series of permanent replacements enacted, which underline the ironic impossibility of Modernism's desperate dictum, *Make it New*.¹⁰

Through his poetry, Clough presents an ambivalent view of the past which anticipates what I have just described. Clough's attitude towards his literary forebears is far more Modernist than Victorian. His poetry exemplifies both the Modernist impulse to destroy, renovate and reanimate, and a concomitant need to preserve and safeguard the weight of his cultural inheritance. In the first section of this chapter the former will be examined. Clough's need to demolish what he sees as tired and redundant will be observed in the destructive impulse which his satiric verse enacts. As it is for the Modernists, satire is the tool by which Clough may shatter what he sees as unworkable, making space for a contrary set of values as he does so. The second part of this chapter will

investigate Clough's appropriation of the voice of the past in connection with his own anticipation of the Modernist poetic. Like the Modernists, Clough relies on a vast inflowing of influence in order to construct the referential superstructure necessary for his proto-Modernist verse. The enactment of these processes ensures that Clough's attitude to the past is very different from that of his Victorian contemporaries.

The typical Victorian opinion of the past is neatly encapsulated in a quotation about Sir Walter Scott from John Henry Newman's *Apologia Pro Vita Sua*. Here, Newman writes that:

Sir Walter Scott ... turned men's minds in the direction of the Middle Ages. 'The general need', I said, 'of something deeper and more attractive than what had offered itself elsewhere, may be considered to have led to his popularity'.

(94)

Represented not only by Scott's historical novels, but throughout the nineteenth century by the poetic allegory of Tennyson and Arnold, by the medievalism of Ruskin, Morris and the Arts and Crafts movement, and by the work of the Gothic revival, Newman's desire highlights the typical Victorian wish to look backwards, to the perception of an idealised past — that "something" unavailable either here or "elsewhere" — rather than to look sideways and contextualise or to look forwards with hope. Much Victorian literature is characterised by a reverive nostalgia for the pre-industrialised past. In an observation which also takes Scott, in part, as its subject, Clough reveals a contrastive, more apposite and prospective, view of literary history.

In a lecture written in 1852 and entitled "The Development of English Literature", Clough asks why his

Romantic antecedents failed to describe, and thereby illuminate, their own time in their writing:

We will not enquire why Wordsworth keeps us doing nothing at home, why Scott does not find us something better to do, or whether Byron has any notion of what in his fiery eagerness he wants to do Nor again will I ask for any theory which shall explain and arrange and classify these various and discordant voices, these multifarious and contradictory impulses

(*Prose Works* 141)

Clough's appeal for action, contemporary reflection and relevance distinguishes him from many of his peers. While some, such as John Stuart Mill or Robert Browning, who wrote that "progress is / The law of life" (*Paracelsus* V), embrace the potential of the present and seek to foster the possibilities of the future, far more attempt to ignore it. Clough, however, forges a uniquely Modernist relationship with the past through the historical performances and processes which he enacts. Like Ezra Pound, who projected his interest in classical antiquity, the chivalric romance, and Tang China onto his Modernist verse forms, Clough borrows from the past primarily as a gateway to the present and future.

In "Letters of Parepidemus, Number 1", one of two essays published by Clough in *Putnam's Monthly* in 1853, he takes Solon's famous maxim on education and adapts it to read "Each day grow older and unlearn something" (*Prose Works* 173). Delineating the revolutionary nature of progressive thinking, where freshness and ingenuity can only be achieved by transcending the limitations of stale and accepted thought, Clough reveals his own Modernist viewpoint. "Every new age has something new in it — takes up a new position" (*Prose Works* 173), he writes. "Teachers ... teach us ... their faults and mistakes" only (*Prose Works* 173). Clough's is the mind of

a reformer and his reformation, his attitude to the past and his elevation beyond it, anticipates that of the Modernists later.

In order to *Make it New* as Pound hoped, however, one must first reconstruct the past. Friedrich Nietzsche, one of the seminal formulators of Modernist philosophy, sums up this need to recompose in works such as *The Twilight of the Idols* and when he asserts, in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, that "we must create new values" (27). Clough agrees. He also betrays a belief in a sort of redeeming ignorance and remade knowledge which presages that expressed by Wallace Stevens, the American Modernist poet, as he does so. The reason that much of Clough's most powerful verse, like that of the Modernists, takes the form of satire is in order to carry out his imperative for change.

In a lecture entitled "The Moral Effect of Works of Satire", Clough states that satire is designed to "overcome ... a world of falsehood and wrong" (*Prose Works* 63), and this "wrong" may include stagnation and antiquation. In this way satire is a tool for the implementation of revolution and the creation of the new. "Engendered of love for truth and right" (*Prose Works* 63), as Clough contends, satire is a method of social and philosophical purgation which may allow the increasingly redundant past to fade and the modern to evolve. Clough, in asserting the efficacy of satire in promoting change — "Numbers too careless to heed ... are by the keen edge of satire roused to a sense of their folly and baseness" (*Prose Works* 63) — places his faith in a template of Nietzschean destructivism. Presaging the Modernist desire for transformation and prospectivity, Clough exposes the venom in his own verse when he states that "the last feeling of regret for the past is often shown in the development [i.e., in the creation and expression] of satirical writing" (*Prose Works* 63).

The archetype of the staid and unpenetrating mind displayed by the protagonist in "Dipsychus" is the intimate

other against whom Clough's satire in this poem is directed. In order to enact the programme of revolution for which he strives, it is necessary for Clough to dispel, by effacement and ridicule, the legacy of stagnation which Dipsychus embodies. While criticism has often compared Dipsychus's doubt and insecurity with Clough's own, it is the powerful and self-assured Spirit who best represents Clough's renovative Modernist persona. While the Spirit himself has frequently been associated with the voice of society, he is rather a satirist and a destroyer of society's values.

Although at once a hedonist and a being knowledgeable about, and seemingly at ease in, the real world, his ethereal title, Spirit, immediately conveys his otherworldliness and difference. Like the removed observer in some indirect satire, the Spirit is not familiar with the poem's setting, but comes with an objective and discerning eye, quickly developing and revealing a specific purpose. Hoping to change and correct, the Spirit states his, the satirist's, aim when he says that "You think I'm anxious to allure you — / My object is much more to cure you" (IIA, 18-19)

As in Menippean satire, Clough's "cure" is revealed in the form of a debate. The debate is best able to convey Clough's intent, creating, as it does, a contrastive and mutually illuminating range of reference. This conflict is actualised in the poem through a translation of Dipsychus's own name, meaning "double-minded". The Spirit continually lampoons aspects of Dipsychus's character and the society to which he pathetically aspires. He does this in order to expose its baseness, attempting to steer Dipsychus away from its attraction and entrapment. In the long monologue from scene IV (lines 130-235) particularly, the Spirit illuminates the trivial pretensions and selfish manners of the *nouveaux riches*, ending each stanza with a low-brow variation on the same mocking refrain: "So pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho! / So pleasant it is to have money". At other times his satirical method is less direct, more Horatian, but always his

collusion in, and enactment of, the destructive impulse of satire is apparent.

Dipsychus is frequently insulted, called a "goose" and a "simpleton" (II, 68 & 70) by the Spirit, for example. Dipsychus, throughout the poem, represents naïvety, uncertainty, inaction and complicity in the perpetuation of existing worldly faults. He is an embodiment of reversionism, frailty and indolence, exemplifying the many obstructions which lie in the path of change. However, rather than simply illustrate this stagnation, the Spirit himself chooses to instigate the collapse of such old and outmoded values.

Sardonic, irreverent, unconventional, the Spirit personifies the spirit of revolution and chaos which is necessary if one is to expunge the problems of the immediate past and rebuild something better in their place. Like the military metaphor which the Modernists appropriated to trumpet their new and innovative vision, "avant garde", Clough's renovative aspirations are revealed in his call to action. Through the persona of the Spirit, he writes that "Ill's only cure is, never doubt it, / To do — and think no more about it" (IIA, 40-41). The need for this progress towards change is indisputable, but what is lost, what is gained, and the difficulty of transition between the two, make change a set of events not to be set in motion lightly. Clough, however, braces his constitution, hardens his resolve, as Dipsychus himself strengthens, and writes:

Let us look back on life. Was any change,
Any now blest expansion, but at first
A pang, remorse-like, shot to the inmost seats
Of moral being?

(X, 43-46)

This affirmation of the capacity and need for something new and more relevant to be founded in today's society is reinforced by several passages from the poem.

Both the prologue and the epilogue present a contrast between the conservative and regressive, on the one hand, and the energetic and progressive, on the other, through the attitudes of two men a generation apart. The Spirit's ironic use of the word "Regeneration" (III, 92) in connection with the allure of attractive women belies a more serious concern for moral and social renewal. The mock-baptismal purgation which ends scene V functions in a similar way. It, at once, highlights our resistance to change — both the Spirit and Dipsychus suffer many trivial and unnecessary diversions before they finally enter the water — and our fickle desire to hope for simple and quick answers — "But you — with this one bathe, no doubt, / Have solved all questions out and out" (V, 232-3), the Spirit teases. This purifying rite does, however, foreshadow the emergence of a clearer and deeper vision for Dipsychus later in the poem.

Although the arrangement of "Dipsychus" remains conjectural — it was only assembled in its present state by Clough's widow soon after his death — its pattern of onward progress appears obvious and clear-cut. At the conclusion of "Dipsychus" not only does the Spirit's revolutionary energy remain intact, but Dipsychus has also gained a better insight into the nature of his society. Dipsychus accepts the degradation and instability of the modern world, confirming, finally, that he is at "peace" (XIII, 86) with its demands. The Spirit's aim is reiterated, as much for ourselves as for Dipsychus, near the poem's end, when he says that "I only meant by a perhaps rough shake / To rouse you from a dreamy, unhealthy sleep" (XI, 109-10). In this phrase, we can almost hear Clough appealing to his Victorian peers about the need for some repair to their society. He again betrays his proto-Modernist desire for reinvention as he does so.

For Clough, his verse is the object in which his own dissatisfaction may be vented. Although a political radical — a socialist, who, in 1853, described a deep distrust with democracy ¹¹— most of Clough's renovative energy is not expressed personally, but through the attitudes of the poetic personae which he creates. The object of his satire, like that of the Modernists, is, as one perceptive yet, at the time, dissenting Victorian critic put it, to "enter deeply into the struggles of his own time and ... [do] his utmost to raise men out of confusion and dissonance into harmony and order" (qtd. in Hughes 256). The "order" to which Clough hopes to give a voice is that of the refashioning modern world. The satire which Clough produces in consequence resonates with the destructive passion of his Modernist successors.

For both Clough and the Modernists the use of satire, as a particularly powerful and renovative poetic mode, bears testament to their efforts to promote change and transformation. In "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley", for example, Pound satirises his own immature verse, writing that he sought later "to resuscitate the dead art / Of poetry" in "a half savage country, out of date" (I, 2-6). The effort of the past is seen by Pound to have faltered and the present to have succumbed to its stagnation. In pre-conversion Eliotean poetry too, we are able to witness an intense desire for change expressed with an urgent and vigorous energy. While satire exists in every age, it is seen far less in the Victorian. Clough's angry and dissatisfied energy contrasts greatly with the confidence and optimism typically associated with the middle part of the nineteenth century. Clough's satire embodies, as Tom Paulin has noted, an "intellectual eagerness and freshness" and a "radical commitment" (125) to a vision which I would describe as uniquely Modernist.

Clough, more than any of his peers, takes the faults and failings apparent in his society as a constant poetic subject. In the revertive and repressive attitude that characterises many of his contemporaries, Clough sees the rotten heart of a

disease which threatens to consume much of the endeavour of European history. Through his satire, Clough expresses a pragmatic concern for the present and, more importantly, the future. Clough anticipates, not only in "Dipsychus" but throughout his *oeuvre* and particularly in shorter poems such as "The Latest Decalogue" and "To The Great Metropolis", the violent and renovative poetic energy which the Modernist "avant garde" most obviously exercised. In managing to evoke such poetic power and resonance, Clough shows just how inaccurate is the myth of his apathy, doubt and failure. For him, the stagnation of the past must be alleviated and the boundless potential of the future unleashed. However, in attempting this reconstruction of the future, ironically, it is to the treasury of the past that he frequently turns.

The Treatment of the Past

Appropriation, Allusion, and the "Mythical Method"

In his introduction to the first edition of Ezra Pound's *Selected Poems*, T. S. Eliot describes the way in which the past may be appropriated by the Modernist author in order to create something new and innovative in the present. Here, Eliot uses the metaphor of a mine or an excavation to evoke both the expectation of the search for something precious and the joy of discovery. Despite their desire to shatter what is antiquated and worthless and to erase the prestige of the immediate past, in the vast wealth of their cultural inheritance the Modernists are nevertheless able to find many objects of worth and contemporary relevance. In contrast with the retrospective nostalgia characteristic of much of the Victorian period, the Modernists present a more hopeful and apposite view of the past. For them, history is a repository of limitless possibilities, a treasure-hoard of words and images. The Modernist text expresses both a historical reversionism, and a prospective optimism, in the simultaneous processes of rejection and restoration which it enacts.

In an essay on James Joyce's *Ulysses*, T. S. Eliot describes the "mythical" technique which he and his fellow Modernists had begun to develop. This is the poetic innovation which

allows the Modernists to reanimate and transform the past, empowering them to create something new and remarkable from the rubble, as they saw it, of a cultural heritage ruined by Edwardian and Georgian excess. Eliot explained the "mythical method" as follows:

In using myth, in manipulating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity, Mr. Joyce is pursuing a method which others must pursue after him It is simply a way of controlling, of ordering, of giving a shape and a significance to the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history It is, I seriously believe, a step forward making the modern world possible in art Instead of narrative method, we may use the mythical method.

(*The Dial* 483)

Eliot's "mythical method" is primarily a means of giving a relevant voice to the fragmentary state of the epoch in which he lived. Eliot does this not by ignoring the past, but by appropriating it.

The "mythical" is that method by which the past may be inscribed in, and reconciled with, the contemporary and visionary aspects of the Modernist text. Tradition is redefined, history re-presented, the modern world celebrated and the future experimented with, in a text that ignores the patterns of a visible or concrete reality — the realism or naturalism of the nineteenth-century novel, for example — and replaces them instead with the only possible method of presenting all of these things: the comprehensive and ubiquitous presence of mythological structures in human history. The unsustainable absolutes which Matthew Arnold attempts to distill from the broad scope of cultural history dissipate with the advent of

Eliot's myth of the retrieval of universals as a way of surmounting the actualities of time.

For the Modernists, the "mythical method" comes to delineate their dominant imaginative and narrative technique, one characterised by its dependence on allusion. Behind the page of any given Modernist text lie "tags", referential markers drawn from certain moments in literary or cultural history which are significant to the author and to his or her work. The way in which these "tags" fit together, overlap, and interlock when expanded and juxtaposed produces a submerged commentary on the narrative which reflects the pressure of the cultural unconscious on any individual construct. These "tags" exemplify both the weight of the achievements of the past and a search for roots and order which appear to be absent from modern life. By examining the seemingly haphazard collection of associative thoughts which the Modernist text presents, the reader is forced to question the logic of connection which must link them. In this way, the "mythical method" is able to be decoded, the poetry of submergence and the unconscious unveiled. The result is a mutual elucidation which illuminates both the text in which the allusion appears, and the one from which it is drawn, in often revolutionary ways. By contributing to the understanding of a past text, through the placement of that text in a modern setting and with modern significances, the Modernist artist presents his or her relationship with history, the conclusion of his or her trans-historicism.

While historical allusion is a literary tool widespread in Victorian literature, the comparatively broad range and density, and, more importantly, the underlying pattern of referential structures apparent in Clough's poetry indicate his uniqueness. He does not use allusion sparingly, nor does he frame an entire poem within one limiting historical paradigm, as Browning often does with the Italian Renaissance, for example. Rather, Clough forges in his verse a structure involving many moments in time, all independent of each

other but at the same time mutually dependent for their decodement. Clough's poetry is defined not lineally, but by the web of temporal and textual convergences that underpin it. The sum total of these intersections, these foci, invariably represents the complex relationship of past and present which Clough, like the Modernists, enacts. Although he lacks the extraordinary verbal and allusive compaction characteristic of the High Modernist text in particular, the overlap and interplay of Clough's referential structures produce an important and revolutionary dialogue with history very much like that of the Modernists.

"Dipsychus" contains a large and eclectic referential subtext that both provides a buried commentary on the main body of the text and anticipates the characteristic Modernist struggle with the tyranny of the past. The two characters who speak "Dipsychus", that is the Spirit and Dipsychus himself, do so in various voices. Their dialogue reveals the presence of four languages besides English: Greek, Latin, Italian and French. They immerse within themselves the voices of New Testament disciples, picaresque Spaniards and Enlightenment *philosophes*. While it is impossible for any modern reader to extract every echo or nuance from "Dipsychus", enough of the underlying structure of the poem emerges for us to be able to discern a coherent revelatory pattern. Just as *The Waste Land* is defined by the recurrence of prophecy and the over-arching presence of the *Upanishads*, an ancient Hindu scripture, so "Dipsychus" is embraced by the significance and symbolism of the poem's setting, Venice in Italy,¹² and by the Sodomitic parable with which it is drawn. The voices that Venice has produced throughout history consequently lie at the poem's heart. The poem is constructed from a bedrock of images borrowed from many Venetian texts.

In Tony Tanner's book *Venice Desired*, Venice is described as "... the beautiful city *par excellence*. The city of art, the city as art — and as spectacular example, as the greatest and richest and most splendid republic in the history

of the world, now declined and fallen" (4). It is a historical triumph, and later, after its defeat by Napoleon, a quite literally marooned curiosity. It is sensuous and secret, but also dark and menacing. Lord Byron summarises the depth and ambivalence of Venice's symbolism when he calls it "the greenest island of my imagination" (*Letters* 5 129) and also a "sea-Sodom" (*Marino Faliero* V III 99). The looming presence in "Dipsychus" of Byron himself, of Shakespeare, who created both the Merchant and the Moor of Venice, and John Ruskin, author of *The Stones of Venice*, bear testament to its cultural importance and influence on Clough. Scenes in "Dipsychus" which present the historical significance of Venice intensify its symbolism. In the prologue and epilogue which frame "Dipsychus" proper, Clough presents the two temporal extremes of Venetian significance, the Roman past and the Italian present. These two extremes enfold the poem, which conceptually presents the time in between, in order to historicise and mythologise the fabric of the text.

The inclusion of Horace at the beginning of the poem — "*Simplex duntaxat et unum*" — signifies for Clough the great achievement of classical civilisation, associated with Venice and representative of the mythologies of the distant past. Horace was born in Venusia, a city in southern Italy, which, like Venice later, takes its name from the Roman goddess of love, Venus. Emblematic of love therefore, Venice represents for Clough a commonplace but nonetheless striking continuity, the universality of human emotion. The continuum of the classical and pagan into the medieval and Christian is also apparent in the prologue.

Because the site on which Venice was later built was initially occupied by Roman legionnaires, and because the city itself was founded by Roman citizens fleeing the Hunnish invaders in 452 A.D., Venice may be seen as a new Rome, a Christianised Rome. This is an association borne out by the power which Venice attained during the Middle Ages and

Renaissance. This, in itself, opens up new significances for Clough as he plays proto-Modernist myth-maker.

Within the poem's subtextual structure the relationship of Horace to Venice can be seen to mirror that between that other great Roman poet, Virgil, and the city to whose story he dedicated himself, Rome. The collocation of Horace with the foundation of Venice in the prologue is mythologised in terms of Virgil's famous foundation epic, the *Aeneid*. The *Aeneid* tells of Rome's settlement by the Trojan exile, Aeneas, much as Horace signifies Venice's settlement by Roman exiles in "Dipsychus". For Clough, the continuum of Troy, Rome and Venice, of Homer, who first described Troy's fall in the *Iliad*, Virgil and Horace, is implicit in the huge literary-historical subtext which he creates in "Dipsychus". Clough accentuates this continuity through his inclusion of numerous Roman gods, of Caesar and Calpurnia, and of Juvenal. By presenting Latin in the prologue, Clough also continues to foreground this symbolism, but the later example also contains a relevant, literal element.

The Latin proverb near the prologue's end reflects the attitude to the past which the poem is to present. "*Sunt certi denique fines* " is an extract from a longer saying — "*Est medius in rebus sunt certi denique fines quos ultra citraque requit consistere rectum* " — meaning that "there is a medium in all things; there are, in fact, certain bounds on either side of which rectitude cannot exist". This adage summarises exactly what Clough, in employing something very like the "mythical method", attempts to overcome. The idea of a median and of boundaries disappears because of the ever-presence of a life beyond them. Although rectitude is here confined, beyond it, unuttered, lies always its opposite, immorality and darkness. Clough evokes the fundamental dichotomy of good and evil, the Manichaeian emblematic of light and dark which Pound particularly appropriates and presents in the Modernist period. Such a dichotomy, such a struggle and difference, is evinced by a translation of the poem's title. The body of the

poem itself continues to foreground the symbolism of Venice as it contends with the legacy of the past.

In scene I "the nearer North" (I, 2) and Naples, the setting of Clough's "Easter Day", are discarded as surroundings for the poem in a self-reflexive act of authorial replacement, one which highlights what an important role the stage eventually chosen, Venice, is to play. As the Spirit and Dipsychus discuss, to borrow from another poem, if "Christ is yet risen" ("Easter Day II", 11), Venice is presented as a new, but upside-down, Holy Land. Speaking of the Resurrection, the Spirit says:

Having once happened, as we know,
In Palestine so long ago
How should it now at Venice here?

(I, 36-38)

The antithesis of Palestine and Venice is highlighted, but their collocation immediately associates the latter with the biblical imagery which suffuses the poem.

In the panorama of Venice which we see subsequently, the festive Venetian crowd — "idlers" (I, 58), "beggars" (I, 56), "half-breached boys" (I, 60) and "dark-eyed girls" (I, 42) — celebrate amorality and carnality like the inhabitants of the legendary cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. The story of the divine destruction of both of these cities for godlessness and debauchery is told in the Old Testament. Venice is seen by Clough as a place that has rejected certain moral precepts. These are precepts associated with Modernism, such as authority, community and progress. It is a symbol of the desolate modern city, like that presented by Laforgue or depicted in Eliot's *The Waste Land*, and Clough seeks to present its failings before it suffers a Sodom's fate. Here, Clough is also, no doubt, working with the Byronic description of Venice as a "sea-Sodom", evoking too, an apocalyptic vision which neatly presages that of W. B. Yeats during the

Modernist epoch. Also anticipating Stevens, who articulated God's death and his replacement by art, Clough ends the first scene presciently, writing "Ah heaven, too true, at Venice / Christ is not risen either!" (I, 78-79). Clough hopes that an alternative to Christ will alight, and he associates this alternative with a proto-Modernist conception of art and society. Like Stevens therefore, it is through the metaphor of art, or more particularly, architecture, that redemption is finally identified by Clough.

As the poem progresses, Venice is seen more and more as a Sodom. Its inhabitants are those pretentious and dissolute *nouveaux riches* who sing "How pleasant it is to have money" (IV, 136-235) and their city is characterised by regression and facade. "Come leave your Gothic, worn-out story" (IV, 204) the Spirit, Clough's renovative Modernist persona, appeals. The futurist vision which Clough holds is ignored by the Venetian Sodomites, who reject the spirit of progress and modernity. This is emblematised in a description of Venice's classical architecture:

In all new work that would look forth
To more than antiquarian worth,
Palladio's pediments and bases
Or something such, will find their places.

(IV, 212-215)

Here, Clough embeds his criticism of the reversion apparent in nineteenth-century society in a description of the persistence of outdated Classical models in modern architecture. Clough's allusion to "Gothic" models a few lines earlier is a particularly pointed criticism of his Victorian contemporaries and their preoccupation with Gothic Revival design. However, there is one building, one architectural construct, which both expresses and defines Clough's Modernism.

In the seventh scene of "Dipsychus", Clough delineates Venice's "grand arcade" as follows:

This grand arcade where our Venetian
Has formed of Gothic and of Grecian
A combination strange but striking,
And singularly to my liking.
Let moderns reap where ancients sowed —
I at least make it my abode.

(VII, 3-8)

Venice's "grand arcade" exemplifies the ideal work of Modernist art. The "combination strange but striking" represents the eclecticism of the "mythical method". It encapsulates the techniques of multifariousness and fusion, the manifold desires and varied designs, which make the Modernist text so distinctive. Clough's phrase, "Let moderns reap where ancients sowed", summarises the process of creation by appropriation, reformation and reinvention. Clough anticipates and employs what, in "Tradition and the Individual Talent", Eliot describes as the necessary spirit of Modernist artistic creation. The allegorical relationship of the Venetian and the biblical, seen already in the metaphor of Sodom, recurs significantly at the poem's end and through the character of the Spirit.

Clough deliberately evokes the Faust story (this, to be absolutely correct, belongs to the Christian literary tradition rather than to the Bible itself) when he makes the Spirit the devilish tempter. In scene IIA he is a "filthy Belial" (11) and in scene VIII, "Mephistopheles" (44). Asked by Dipsychus to identify himself at the poem's conclusion, the Spirit replies:

Why, Mephistopheles, you know —
At least you've lately called me so;
Belial it was some days ago.

But take your pick, I've got a score —
 Never a royal baby more.

(XIII, 58-62)

The Spirit is indeed a manipulative tempter, but he is not symbolic of the regressive evil which the inhabitants of Venice itself represent. Rather, he is a voice for change and betterment.

The Spirit is not a conventionally heinous devil, but he is something of an avenging angel. Because he represents the achievement of the past and the prospect of the future, the compound ghost of human endeavour, he is an angel in Clough's proto-Modernist cause. He takes a devil's name because he symbolises the destruction of all stagnation, including Christian antiquation, and because he is a powerful representation of otherness, emblematic of the scope for newness and recreation. Venice is the body and Dipsychus is the mind of the tired object that the Spirit hopes to change. Venice is indeed a Sodom and the Spirit is the divine hand designed to sweep the evil of regression away. Because Venice is representative of a ubiquitous historical presence, of power and empire and the licentiousness and leisure which inevitably accompany strength and fulfilment, it is indicative of any number of great political centres. Venice is a Sodom, a Troy, an Athens, a Rome, a Constantinople, a Florence, a London, and a New York in our own time. The Spirit is the Nietzschean destroyer who always lurks behind, ready, waiting to overwhelm and replace. He is also, therefore, a vibrant and conscientious creator. Clough sounds a warning to his Victorian contemporaries which the Modernists, nothing changed, were impelled to repeat half a century later. At the close of "Dipsychus", Clough, having retold Venice's story throughout, portends the collapse of Western civilisation in the parable of Venice's own decline. London is the next in the inevitable succession of power attainment and power loss. In

the music and musical reference of "Dipsychus", Clough continues to mythologise his poem in terms of Venice and its symbolism.

Just as *The Waste Land* includes incantations from the *Upanishads* alongside rhythmic imitations of twentieth-century rag, vaudeville and music hall song — in the "Mrs. Porter" section of "The Fire Sermon", for example — so "Dipsychus" embraces the cadenced extremes of opera, on the one hand, and rhythmic doggerel on the other. In *Ecce Homo*, Friedrich Nietzsche writes that "When I seek another word for music, I never find any other word than Venice" (62). Clough echoes this sentiment. Venice is a traditional operatic centre. During Clough's lifetime Verdi's *Rigoletto* premiered in Venice and Liszt produced his famous "Venetian" symphonies. Despite its Spanish setting, "Dipsychus" incorporates Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* as a single emblem of this well of operatic significance. It is, after all, an Italian libretto based upon a French play and adapted by an Italian composer, and therefore perfectly exemplifies something like the "mythical method". Clough evokes Europe's cultural heritage, of which Venice is an integral part, as the Spirit repeatedly sings fragments of the aria in which Figaro recites his name. However, in keeping with the eclecticism of the "mythical method", Clough alternates this rhythmic elevation with lines of meaningless warble — tooraloos and fiddle di dis, for example. At the poem's end, Clough also includes the straightforward rhythms of nursery rhyme.

As the verse body of "Dipsychus" closes, the Spirit frequently sings "Little Bo Peep, she lost her sheep". Reflecting the naïvety and simplicity of a child's thoughts, this phrase alternates with esoteric lines of ancient Greek and the predominant presence, at this stage, of the Faust myth. A reference to Christ's flock, and, more especially, to those who have strayed from it, this nursery rhyme belies its humble origins as it symbolically encapsulates the growing spiritual void discerned in modern life, the incompatibility of

commerce with the ideals of Christian temperance. The association of childhood with undiluted good makes the nursery rhyme a perfect vehicle for this message. Clough packs such a vast and timeless web of symbolism into "Dipsychus", with its envelopment by Venice and the Bible in particular.

For Clough, as for most of the Modernist writers, there is one location, one literary-historical site, which comes to form a dominant and over-arching symbol in their work. Italy serves this purpose for Clough throughout his *oeuvre*, and Venice does so particularly in this poem. Clough is not alone. For two of Modernism's most important antecedents, two of its most accomplished early century exponents, and two of High Modernism's foremost practitioners, Venice also fulfils this role. Like Clough before them, they find in the rich emblematicism of Venice the object through which the voice and desires of literary Modernism can be expressed. Venice is a perfect symbol for the despoliated modern world — a great city now ruined and decayed — and it is one which Clough anticipates decades before its appearance in Modernist literature.

For both Henry James and Hugo von Hofmannstahl Venice was "the Venice of dreams" (James *Letters* 1 134), somewhere strange and otherworldly. In James's *The Aspern Papers* and *The Wings of the Dove* and Hofmannstahl's *Andreas*, the quasi-Symbolist evocation of the terrible phantasmagoria of the city captures all of the buried emblematicism of Venice and of modern times. In Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice* and E. M. Forster's *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, we see this symbolism repeated within a maturing literary expression of the Modernist philosophy. Marcel Proust, the French High Modernist, exemplified his deep attraction to Venice by translating many of the works of Ruskin. Elsewhere, Proust writes that Venice "magnetised my desires" (*Remembrance of Things Past* I 422). For him, it was "real without being actual, ideal without being abstract"

(*Remembrance of Things Past* III 906).¹³ Even among the diverse historical poles which Ezra Pound embraces, Venice stands out. It was to Venice that Pound first travelled on arriving in Europe in 1908, and thereafter he lived in the city, on and off, for many years. Pound translated the work of many of Venice's finest Renaissance poets. In some of his earliest poems — "San Vio June", "Almo sol Veneziae" and "Partenza de Venezia" — and some of his latest — Cantos 21, 24, 74, 80, 83 and 104, for example — Venice appears and reappears.

For the Modernists, as for Clough, Venice is an overarching cultural and intellectual symbol. For the *Zeitgeist* of Modernism Venice is a perfect and potent emblematic expression. It is grand and powerful, and its art reflects that. Then, like the Western civilisation which Clough and the Modernists see crumbling around them, Venice falters, gasps, never to regain its former glory. It succumbs to the degradation and torpor which Clough sees manifest in his own society, illustrating the threat to the possibility of all positive endeavour with its decline. Clough exemplifies the answer to this problem in "Dipsychus". Not only does he represent and symbolise nineteenth-century Europe throughout the poem and in Venice in particular, but in employing the "mythical method" he posits modern degradation's immutable solution: learn from the mistakes of the past and adapt an apposite answer.

The fabric of "Dipsychus" is rich and dense and varied; it is suffused with the ubiquitous events of human history. "Dipsychus" is built on the struts and planks of a universal mythology and is underpinned by the bedrock of symbols of human endeavour. It attempts to capture what is alive in our consciousness through the language that it speaks. "Dipsychus" is polyglottal, heterogeneous and expansive. It enfolds certain key emblems, and works by reanimating these with trans-historical relevance. The form of "Dipsychus", like that of the Modernist text, strives constantly to engage with the past and

to reflect its futurism, express its reinvention. Prose prologue and epilogue, and disparate, often distracted and fragmentary, verse body reproduce this eclectic and renovative desire formally. Through the vast and timeless, frequently submerged mythologies which underlie "Dipsychus", Clough enacts both the Modernist decreation of the past and recreation of the future. Here, as elsewhere (as we shall shortly see), Clough's anticipation of the Modernist poetic is also very clear. Having examined Clough's view of the past, and, in my first chapter, the past's view of Clough, we may now concentrate on the way in which Clough applies the lessons which his historical examination has taught him.

Chapter 3

Clough and the Modernist Poetic

Modernist Poetic Theory and Clough's Literary Criticism

In his essays and lectures Clough leaves behind a body of work which both outlines his personal poetic theory and, when compared, reveals just how closely these ideas anticipate those of the Modernists. Rejecting the temporal reversionism found in much Victorian verse, Clough, in a lecture entitled "Recent English Poetry", contends that "poetry should deal more than at present it usually does, with general wants, ordinary feelings, the obvious rather than the rare facts of human nature" (*Prose Works* 144). For him, poetry should not "content itself merely with talking of what may be better elsewhere, but seek also to deal with what is here" (*Prose Works* 145). Elsewhere, Clough criticises William Wordsworth for "retiring early from all conflict and even contact with the busy world" (*Prose Works* 119). Clough writes that "he shut himself out from the elements which it was his business to encounter and to master" (*Prose Works* 119). Rejecting the solitude idealised by the Romantic poets, and which persisted in some form in early Victorian poetry — what Clough calls our "dreamy patience" (*Prose Works* 159) —

he recognises that embracing the mutability of modern life is the only way of adequately expressing it. Clough realised, as the Modernists did after him, that poetry had to be "made new" — made modern — if it were to faithfully reflect the contemporary world.

For Clough in the nineteenth century, as for the Modernists in the twentieth, the entrenched modes of thought and creative expression were similarly incapable of correcting the perceived crisis in Western civilisation, or even of presenting it accurately. Reality was characterised by fission and flux, and was ultimately ungraspable by means of conventional logic and worn-out language. Humanity's historical direction and sense of progress had been disrupted by the mutations of modern life and by its increasing displacement from the stabilities associated with the past. A radical reappraisal of literary tradition and artistic method was needed in order to represent, if not rectify, this dislocation. Only by undermining the hackneyed conventions of the immediate past could space for the new endeavour be made and its discourse be established. "No good poetry", wrote Ezra Pound, "is ever written in a manner twenty years old, for to write in such a manner shows conclusively that the writer thinks from books, convention and 'cliche', and not from real life ..." (*Essays* 11). Clough, like Pound and the Modernist "avant garde", aimed to assault and overthrow such "convention", such established artistic standards and cultural beliefs. It was imperative that the *Zeitgeist* of the new age be given a relevant voice. Clough's satiric verse most obviously enacts this concomitant process of destruction and recreation. Ultimately, the Cloughean or Modernist narrative must reproduce the perceptions and processes of the new world; it must, as T.S. Eliot wrote, "be able to see beneath both beauty and ugliness; to see the boredom, and the horror, and the glory ..." apparent in modern life (*Use of Poetry* 106). Clough prematurely sensed the collapse of Western society, and, like

the Modernists after him, sought to create new solutions to the problems which this raised.

In his essay, "The Metaphysical Poets", Eliot states that "our civilisation comprehends great variety and complexity, and this variety and complexity, playing upon a refined sensibility, must produce various and complex results. The poet must become more allusive, more indirect, in order to force, to dislocate if necessary, language into its meaning ..." (*Essays* 275). Clough anticipates this solution (in the "mythical" superstructure of "Dipsychus", for example). Just as Eliot contends that the modern poet must enact a reassessment of artistic forms and cultural values based on a new sense of the present — on a precise and lucid awareness of knowledge and an innovative attitude to language and thought — so too does Clough. In "Recent English Poetry" Clough affirms that poetry must depict "the actual, palpable things with which our everyday life is concerned" (*Prose Works* 144), and he devises a definitively proto-Modernist language in which to express this. When Eliot, describing Donne in "The Metaphysical Poets", writes that "a thought to ... [him] was an experience; it modified his sensibility. When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work it is constantly amalgamating disparate experience" (*Essays* 273), we can recognise both the elements of apposition and eclecticism to which Clough — his mind attuned, like Eliot's, to the shifting modern world — devoted his poetic. By returning to the might of his European cultural heritage, as something like the "mythical method" exemplifies — to the Metaphysical poets and their conception of language and the word — Eliot allows techniques of precise prescription and exact description to be unearthed for the new century, techniques which Clough anticipates. The need for a freshness and immediacy, for a simultaneously emotional and intellectual depth of sensation to be fostered, is found in the work of both Clough and Eliot. Both poets agree that the modern writer should, like the Metaphysical, enact a scrupulous coupling of thought and

feeling through the use of exact, concrete language and imagery. He or she must experience life with a trained and astute eye, and then find the ideal method of expressing the significant moments which this examination uncovers. The Metaphysical poets represent a "sensibility" that has been lost; a mode of thinking that was displaced by the Classicist and Romantic poets who predominated in the two centuries prior to Modernism and which Clough, presaging the Modernists, seeks to revive.

Rejecting the Victorians' "dissociation of sensibility" (*Essays* 274), their floridness and over-reliance on convention, Eliot, like Clough, looked towards the "truth", the realities, of the modern world in order to find his ideal poetic practice. In "The Metaphysical Poets", Eliot appeals for a poetry that captures "the ordinary man's experience" and all of its "chaotic, irregular, fragmentary" character (*Essays* 273). Clough similarly wished to record the "general wants [and] ordinary feelings" of normal human life (*Prose Works* 144). Like the Metaphysicals, with their foregrounding of the intellect and apposite observation, and with the poetic precision to which their minds thus attuned lent themselves, Clough and the Modernists looked primarily to record the world around them. Just as the Metaphysical poets found in Renaissance science, in alchemy and astrology particularly, a model from which to derive, and in which to delineate, their perfect poetic praxis, so Clough and the Modernists found in the huge advancements of their respective science and technologies the key ingredient to the formulation of their poetic praxes. The Modernist writer shared with the Modernist painter or sculptor, the Italian "Futurists" or Taitlin and the Russian industrial artists for example, a preoccupation with the capabilities and attributes of the then burgeoning "art" of science. "Consider the way of the scientist", Pound repeats in "Imagisme" (*Essays* 204). "Art is all science, all religion, philosophy and metaphysic", he says in the same essay (*Essays* 200). Further illustrating this in *The Spirit of*

Romance, Pound writes that "poetry is a sort of inspired mathematics, which gives us equations, not for abstract figures, triangles, spheres, and the like, but equations for the human emotions" (14). Elsewhere, Pound likens an "abstract mathematician's ... deductions on the functions of imaginary values" to a "serious poet's" discovery of "some new subtlety of cadence" (*Prose* 331). It was from science that metaphors for cerebral, intellectualised, precise, mathematical Modernist verse forms were garnered, metaphors which Clough anticipated.

As with the Modernist poet, verse, for Clough, was a primarily cerebral act of creation. In contrast with the Romantics' tendency to concentrate on "inspiration" and emotion, Clough and the Modernists sought to make their poetry an exercise for the mind. Clough's text is a typically Modernist "writerly" construct, one characterised by great mental depth and power. It seeks to stimulate rather than to dictate. In attempting such a cerebral performance, Clough, like the Modernists, looks towards the machine — its refinement and accuracy in movement and calculation — in order to find a paradigm for his own poetic practice. Strikingly anticipating the vocabulary of Imagism, Clough writes in his lecture on Wordsworth that "poetry, like science, has its final precision" (*Prose Works* 114). The focus and exactness asked for in this quotation match the Modernist desire for directness and an economy of words. Clough's science and art, dynamics and poetry metaphor also encompasses Eliot's conception of thought and form apparent in "The Metaphysical Poets". In the same essay, Clough writes that "we err if we forget that poetry also is a sort of science — a register at any rate of phenomena — and phenomena of the most subtle, evanescent, intangible nature ..." (*Prose Works* 122). For Clough, the poet must be a scrupulous recorder of events and his or her poetic manner should reflect the accuracy demanded of this task. Elsewhere, Clough writes that the poet must be "a mechanic" (*Prose Works* 165) — he must forge and fix with a machine's

exactness. Clough seeks to engineer a verbal "appliance", and this "appliance" shares much with the description of a machine made out of words which William Carlos Williams, the American Modernist poet, devised. Williams' mechanical metaphor applies as equally to Clough's conception of the image as it does to his idea of language.

In "A Few Don'ts by an Imagist", Pound describes his ideal image as one "which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time" (*Essays* 200). Pound asks for a picture that is simple, sharp, total and effective. His assertion that "it is better to present one Image in a lifetime than to produce voluminous works" (*Essays* 201) reinforces this. Clough propounds something similar. In "Recent English Poetry", he explains the way in which precise scholarship and exact imagery can capture the entire breadth of something expansive as if "to bring together into a single focus, the scattered rays of human intelligence" (*Prose Works* 144). Like Pound, it is the total, focused, concise capacity of the image that he searches for. In the same essay, Clough expresses "a preference for the picture of simple, strong and certain, rather than of subtle, shifting and dubious feelings" (*Prose Works* 165). For Clough, as for the Modernists, it is the simple, concrete image that is most effective. When Clough criticises a fellow poet, Alexander Smith, for a poetic style that appears like "a board crowded as thick as they can stand with images, big and little ..." (*Prose Works* 165), it is with his proto-Modernist conception of the precise image and its scrupulous usage in mind that he chides. He desires, instead, "a single image, without any repeated reflection, so to speak, in a second mirror" (*Prose Works* 167). Elsewhere, in "Letters of Parepidemus, Number Two", Clough states that a poem should be "a model of condensation, brevity, smoothness" (*Prose Works* 183). Anticipating Pound's contention that, in poetry, there must be "no superfluous word, no adjective, which does not reveal something" (*Essays* 201), that verse must be "harder and saner" (*Essays* 12) than before, Clough again

presages certain fundamental aspects of the Modernist poetic. Just as Pound felt that it was only through the coupling of a pared down and precise manner of self-expression with the scope and exactness of meaning that great, modern poetry could be written, so Clough felt that "force and condensation are good, but it is possible to combine them with purity of phrase" (*Prose Works* 166). Poetic density, precision and purity, that is saying what one wants to say without unnecessary superfluity, are the ideals to which Clough and the Modernists aspire.

By incorporating all that I have already mentioned — the need for a contemporary mode of versification, the Metaphysicals and their conception of the homogeneity of thought and idea, the influence of scientific and mechanical ways of thinking — the Modernists formulated a definite modern poetic; one which, as we have seen, Clough anticipates. In "the three principles of Imagism", Pound encapsulates what are the most important of Imagism's characteristics:

1. Direct treatment of the "thing" whether subjective or objective.
2. To use absolutely no word that does not contribute to the presentation.
3. As regarding rhythm: to compose in the sequence of the musical phrase, not in sequence of a metronome.

(*Essays* 199)

Clough subscribes to a similar set of dictates. His poetic "treatment" is similarly straightforward and precise; his description also exact and compact. Pound's "three principles" formed the basis of the Modernist poetic. They were endorsed

by the writers who were later to become associated with High Modernism. T. E. Hulme in "Romanticism and Classicism", for instance, also demanded that poetry be precise, unsentimental and characterised by a brevity and hardness; while Yeats wrote that "as I look back upon my own writings, I take pleasure alone in those verses where it seems to me I have found something hard and cold ..." (*Autobiographies* 274). Exacting standards of regulation, brevity and totality were asked for, standards best exemplified by the succinctness of something like Pound's "In a Station at the Metro" or the exceptional schematic compression of contemporary history in "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley". In an epoch noted for its typically elaborate concentration on the imagination and emotion, Clough's verse presents a remarkably modern set of literary criteria.

Clough derives his criteria in part, like the Modernists, from his knowledge of the difficulties of translation. For the Victorians, translation was a common part of their literary endeavour. Both Arnold and Clough rendered parts of Homer into English, and Clough translated and published five volumes of Plutarch's *Lives*. However, Clough's and Arnold's respective attitudes to translation were very different. In "Letters of Parepidemus, Number Two: On Translating Homer", Clough criticises past translators of Homer — notably Chapman, Milton and Pope, but also his fellow Victorians, including Arnold — for their inability to capture in "melodious and flexible form of speech the old Homer" (*Prose Works* 181). Their efforts serve only to impair the meaning and rhythmic grace of Homer's original work, he contends. Clough's appeal for a malleable translatable verse type, a verse form that is necessarily flexible yet precise, accurate and always demanding mental dexterity, indicates the attributes which Clough hopes to transpose from translation and encourage in his own verse. For the Modernists, as for Clough, translation was a perfect means of disciplining themselves to write in a precise and accurate manner. In "Imagisme", Pound writes

that "translation is ... good training, if you find that your original matter 'wobbles' when you try to rewrite it" (*Essays* 206). Like Pound, who also chides Homer's previous translators, writing in "Early Translators of Homer" that they "have wasted time, involved their English, trying first to evolve a definite logical structure for the Greek and secondly to preserve it, and all its grammatical relations, in English" (*Essays* 273), Clough derives a precise modern poetic from his examination of the stylistic mistakes which he believes other translators to have made. In his introduction to *The Translations of Ezra Pound*, Hugh Kenner, describing Pound's version of "The Seafarer", writes that only he "has had both the boldness and resource to make a new form, similar in effect to the original, which permanently extends the bounds of English verse" (9). This is the ideal to which Clough and Modernist composition aspires. By assuming the intellectual challenge which translation affords, Clough and the Modernists are able to discipline and perfect the exactness of their own poetic practice.

With his contemporaries, it appears, Clough had very little in common. "Our own age is notorious for slovenly or misdirected habits of composition", Clough writes in "The Development of English Literature" (*Prose Works* 135). This quotation presents a proto-Modernist criticism of the nature of the Victorian poetic. Knowing what we now do of Clough's poetic theory, we are able to contrast Victorian 'slovenliness' with the almost Imagist precision for which Clough strove. The 'misdirection' of mid nineteenth-century verse encompasses the temporal and artistic reversion which Tennyson and the post-Romantics typically embody. What Clough wants is a poetic that captures the reality of the present and the potentiality of the future. Clough laments the "poverty, narrowness and uniformity" of his "own preceding literature" (*Prose Works* 132),¹⁴ much as the Modernists lament the work of their Edwardian and Georgian antecedents. It is these authors that each seeks to move beyond. In these negative

terms, those of artistic disappointment and impoverishment, Clough describes his view of the Victorians' Romantic inheritance. If we see Victorian poetry as primarily a development of turn-of-the-century Romanticism, and we may quite easily do so — recognising, as we can, the influence of Wordsworth and Keats on Tennyson and Arnold, or that of Shelley on Browning and Swinburne — Clough's difference from his peers regarding attitude and poetic practice appears enormously marked, significant, and very clear.

While the majority of his Victorian peers tended to look backwards, Clough looks forwards. In both his poetry and prose Clough consciously attempts to distance himself from his contemporaries. His poetic innovation bears testament to this self-conscious need to differentiate. In "The Development of English Literature", "Lecture on Wordsworth" and "Recent English Poetry" particularly, Clough's attitude to his verse-writing compatriots is uniformly reproachful and dismissive. He repeatedly criticises their ideas regarding poetry and life; their verse practice he sees as inappropriate, outmoded and trite. Clough implicitly contrasts the Victorians' post-Romantic reversionism with his own prospective vision in the first essay. Whereas Clough wishes to "take things as we find them, and make the best we can of them" (*Prose Works* 184), many of the Victorians seemed, to him, to ignore the present state altogether and focus on the past. Clough's choice of many noticeably unique verse forms reflects his difference, his antipathy, as does his idiosyncratic use of language, image and symbol. For Clough, poetry is best represented by the precepts and practices of literary Modernism much later.

Clough and the Modernist Poetic

Language, Form, and Style

In Clough's poetry, we see his uniqueness played out. In one of his shorter poems, "Lips, lips, open!" (also published as "A Sleeping Child"), Clough displays his practical application of many of the key points of Imagism which he anticipates and articulates in prose. In this poem Clough invents a single, over-arching image, that of a "little bird", and in it embeds the entire force of meaning of his poem. Through the concentrated emblem of the bird (the poem is only twenty-one lines long), he conjures up many of the significances attached to "sleep", darkness and death, to youth and old age, to inspiration (like Keats's nightingale), transitoriness and reward. The idea of a life lived but still littered with so much time unfulfilled and wasted lies at the heart of the poem. By following the image of the creature through the poem, and reinforcing this with the continual repetition of the phrase "little bird", Clough seeks to construct what Pound described as "an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time" (*Essays* 200). Clough's poem encapsulates the needs of both the heart and the head. While the bird moves and the poem thus possesses an obvious narrative momentum (it is, however, a rather fantastical one), and therefore takes as its subject more than one given temporal moment, the poem nevertheless seeks

only to produce and focus a single constant and significant image. Clough's image is "direct, free from emotional slither" (*Essays* 12), as Pound states in "Prolegomena"; it lacks the conventional Romantic preoccupation with the prolixity associated with sensory description. Clough buries within the images connected with his subject the full weight of his meaning; he does not elaborate wordily on the theme of his poem. "Lips, lips, open" also fulfils the role Pound ascribed to the emblem in the same essay; its "symbolic function does not obtrude" (*Essays* 9) on the superficial, almost fairy-tale meaning of the poem. The bird is the obvious subject of the poem and the reader does not have to plumb the symbolism of the poem if he or she does not wish to. This is part of the Modernist poet's desire to allow for the ordinary person's capabilities within the otherwise complex structure of his or her verse. Clough's use of short, easy octosyllabics, presented in a way that foregrounds their rhythmical relationship — through the repetition of certain words and the use of close, tight couplet rhymes — makes his poem a testament to Pound's vision of a cadence reminiscent more of the "musical phrase" than the "metronome" (*Essays* 199). The poem moves effortlessly forwards. "Lips, lips, open!", like William Carlos Williams' "So much depends / On a red wheel barrow", for example, presents a single, concentrated image with a rhythmical and poetic hardness and precision. The object of the poem's focus is never lost and the connection it hopes to establish between image, content and sensation never falters. Clough, like the Modernists, makes his image the sum of his matter and meaning.

Always, for Clough, it is the image that is overriding. In other short poems — the quasi-Symbolist presentation of the sordid city in "To The Great Metropolis" and "In The Great Metropolis", the emblematic presence of certain biblical figures in something like "Epi-Strauss-ium" or "Genesis XXIV", the image of Provence in "Les Vaches" or first-nation America in "How in all wonder Columbus got over" — Clough again

follows an image, or tight group of mutually dependent images, in his effort to be true to his ideal of scrupulous poetic self-expression. He describes only one object, as in the "Great Metropolis" poems, expanding its significances as he moves forwards by incorporating the symbolic paraphernalia with which it is commonly associated. In "To the Great Metropolis", the busy life of the modern city is evoked through concise images such as "traffic" (1) and "fashion" (2), "Competition and Display" (3). The bare and pared down nature of these nouns belies the presence of a vast well of culturally formulated associations within each of them. "Display", for instance, connotes in a single word all of the baseness and superficiality of bourgeois society, evoking both Victorian consumer culture and the deliberately impressive propagandist architecture or statuary then *en vogue* in the decoration of English cities. "Display" is, therefore, intimately associated with the trinity of middle-class architectural images with which the poem ends. The "Bazaar" (12), or department store, for instance, is an exclusive by-product of bourgeois power and affluence. It was owned, and almost solely patronised, by members of the new middle class. This, together with the "railway terminus" and "gay Hotel" (13), emblematically evokes the typical itinerary of a visit to the city by the members of this social group. Clough concisely encapsulates the bourgeois commercial ideology as he enshrines their pretensions in a concentrated, interdependent set of culturally "loaded" images. In contrast with the prolixity typical of much Romanticism, Clough is content to encapsulate all of his meaning in a single noun, a single focused image or image cluster. In the same poem, Clough embeds his satire of the modern city in the tightly integrated significances of the word "Capital" (4). Here, he puns on "capital" in order to undermine the "capital's" political and social splendour with connotations of "capital", money, greed and corruption. London is "Anything but a mighty Nation's heart" (14), he concludes. It is the formulaic control and compaction afforded by the use of a focused and

continuous single image which sees Clough's verse anticipate the structure and character of Modernist poetry. His concentrated image is an obvious reflection of the brevity and exactness which his proto-Modernist poetic demands. Just as this is true of the shorter poems, so too is it true of Clough's longer poems.

Shifting like frames from a movie, much of Clough's longer poetry likewise depends for its effect on the presence of various distinctive image clusters, each outwardly independent but at the same time connected by the continuity of their theme and focus. Clough presents us with a succession of verbal and visual images which, as they progress, join, meld and alter to create, finally, one coherence within the poem. In "Amours de Voyage", for example, Clough begins the poem with an over-arching image of "The world that we live in" (I, 5). He then proceeds to pare it down from the vast and general to the localised and particular. The first "letter" of the first Canto describes Rome in precise detail — "St. Peter's" (I, 13), "the Arch of Titus" (I, 14) — then constructs a broad image of the ancient world, documenting its rise and fall. This is evinced by the concise evocation of "Mount Sinai", "Troy", "Athens" (I, 17), and the "Goths" (I, 24). Judaeo-Christian antiquity, the Homeric heroic tradition, "Golden Age" Athens and Rome and the latter's defeat by the barbarian tribes of the north are all present in the spatially tiny, but connotatively vast, specific image-structure of the poem. In the word "Athens" alone lie innumerable significances, encompassing many of the most important thinkers and figures in the European cultural consciousness. At the end of the first "letter", Clough transposes Mediterranean antiquity onto modern London. Through this succession of images, each depicted with the sort of exactitude which we would expect of him, Clough begins to build his proto-Imagist narrative. Each image is dependent on the compaction of its image group and the way in which it relates to, and creates, the image cluster which is to follow. Clough shifts from modern to classical Rome

via the architectural remains which he finds there. Next he moves from classical Rome to the other major centres of classical civilisation and from there back to the present-day city. Finally, Clough finds in the symbols of Rome's failed glory a fitting metaphor for modern London and it is to London that he finally, conceptually, shifts. The metaphor of decline and fall, and its associated images, recur repeatedly throughout the poem. The Gothic hordes are replaced, in "Amours de Voyage" and with its preoccupation with the 1848 Revolutions, by the French and Austrian armies which threaten to again destroy Italy's cultural splendour. Intimately related image cluster follows intimately related image cluster as Clough both evokes and historicises the significance of his emblems. The reader is presented with a succession of tightly inscribed, but nonetheless emblematically explosive, images which serve to build the metaphoric structure of the poem. Each image evokes a sizeable fragment of the world in a way that is deceptively concise.

The events described in "Amours de Voyage" take place in two very definite locales, Rome and Florence, yet the thematic scope of the poem is far greater than that identifiable with any one place. Throughout the poem, Clough both repeats and reformulates the images which give the poem its proto-Modernist shape and character. In the couplet "What shall I do? Go on through Tyrol, Switzerland, Deutschland, / Seeking, an inverse Saul, a kingdom, to find only asses?" (IV, 31-32), for example, at least half-a-dozen specific images and a number of connotative significances flood the lines. Biblical antiquity and political contemporaneity transform and fuse into one compact, now almost inseparable, image. What importance has the German name of Germany? we wonder. Why, then, no Tyrolia, Schweiz or Suisse? How are we to imagine an "inverse Saul"? How does the story of Saul and the ass relate to Claude and his concern with contemporary politics? Clough's image amalgamation is

so complete, so perfect, that we are practically helpless to decipher it. Image upon image melds to create a verse-form that is as dense as that seen in any Imagist text. While recurrent images help give the poem its structure, the variety and adaptability of these images serve, at one level, to exclude the reader. In this way, Clough anticipates the obscure and "writerly" text which preponderates in literary Modernism. Clough formulates, from a succession of precise images, the vast symbolic structure of his poem. Encapsulated, and implicit, within each of his localised images is the enormous store of cultural artifacts with which they are commonly associated and through which Clough constructs his text. Like the Modernist narrative, Clough's "Amours de Voyage" functions by including within its thematic an enormous amount of information and, concomitantly, by subverting the extent to which this information is apparent beneath the surface compaction of the Modernist, image-built text. Rather than explicate and elaborate, fill in and gloss, Clough, adumbrating the "model of condensation, brevity, smoothness" that he appeals for in "Letters of Parepidemus, Number Two" (*Prose Works* 183), adopts the Modernist mode of disciplined and scrupulous poetic representation. Clough chooses to free his verse of the unnecessary verbiage and verbal clutter that is characteristic of so much Victorian verse. Clough anticipates what, several decades later, Edward Thomas wrote of the new verse which Pound was then perfecting: "he has not ... the kind of feeling for nature that runs to minute description and decorative metaphor" (627-28). In so doing, Clough, like the Modernists, produces a text that is at once brief and compact yet metaphorically and thematically varied, rich and powerful. While many critics have argued that "Clough did not use the tightly integrated form or the condensed image packed with implication which are now so much in vogue" (Houghton 27), and were so throughout the Modernist period, this analysis demonstrates that Clough does. While seldom identical in form or matter, Clough anticipates, and

independently formulates, a mode of poetic expression which closely resembles that of Imagistic Modernism.

In attempting this, Clough anticipates what is often regarded as one of the most important characteristics of twentieth-century poetry, the "objective correlative". In "Hamlet and his Problems", T. S. Eliot defines this technique as follows:

The only way of expressing emotion in the form of art is by finding an 'objective correlative'; in other words, a set of objects, a situation, a chain of events which shall be the formula of that *particular* emotion; such that when the external facts, which must terminate in sensory experience, are given, the emotion is immediately evoked.

(*Essays* 145)

This is what the Modernist foregrounding of the image seeks to create. The mechanics of the "objective correlative" are anticipated by Clough, who likewise embeds within a single object or moment the entire force of his emotional or intellectual meaning. We have seen this exemplified by the symbol of the "little bird" in "Lips, Lips, Open!", by the derision that is expressed through the paraphernalia of the modern city in "To the Great Metropolis", and by the sense of inevitable, concomitant cultural achievement and dissolution that is evoked by the collection of objects and events that Clough presents us with throughout "Amours de Voyage". Thereafter that object, Rome or Florence or London in "Amours de Voyage" for example, is forever associated with the social decay that comes to replace and surpass that emblematic signifier in both Clough's and his reader's apprehension of the emotional complex of the poem. Clough constructs his "objective correlative" by denying the floridness characteristic of the Romantic and Victorian mode of sense

expression and, instead, presents a simple object or moment and then makes that object or moment the repository of the emotional force of meaning in his poem. In almost any given Clough poem it is the image, object or event which comes to embody the poem's emotional intensity. By presenting a sequence of concrete objects or external moments, Clough is able to avoid unnecessary prolixity and create and convey his poem's emotional character instantly, precisely, and with a linguistic solidity that is found only in the Modernist text. While the reader is sometimes overwhelmed by the level of compaction which Clough is able to achieve, as in the couplet which I quoted from "Amours de Voyage", his concision remains, as ever, total and complete.

By embedding within his image a deep seam of symbolism, and in the nature of the symbols which he chooses, Clough continues to anticipate and create the Modernist poetic. Like Pound, who explained that "the proper and perfect [Modernist] symbol is the natural object" (by "natural object", Pound means an object drawn from the real, modern world and that contrasts with the idealised, frequently classical objects in which the Romantic or Victorian text generally prefers to delineate itself), Clough borrows his emblems from the contemporary and the natural. Clough also subscribes to Pound's assertion "that if a man uses 'symbols' he must so use them that their symbolic function does not obtrude; so that a sense, and the poetic quality of the passage, is not lost to those who do not understand the symbol" (*Essays* 9). Already we have seen this exemplified repeatedly by the modern city and by the bird in "Lips, lips, open!", a symbol which Clough reuses to similar effect in another of his shorter poems, "Chorus". The Scottish countryside which forms the backdrop for *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* functions in a similar way. Here the setting is more than picturesque and incidental: it is emblematic. The poem's landscape is run through with greater and deeper meanings, meanings which are commonly signified by a proto-Modernist conception of

the natural object. However here, as elsewhere, Clough's poem possesses enough narrative impetus and poetic intensity for a non-emblematic reading of the poem to be equally rewarding.

By looking at *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* we are able to see both how its symbolic and narrative strands co-exist so as not to "obtrude" and how its emblems are almost exclusively sourced from the "natural" world. In its methodological and thematic structure this poem also marks the first major development of Clough's proto-Modernism. *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* begins with the description of a Scottish village gathering: the weather is wonderful, everyone is happy, the men present are depicted as burly athletes and are competing in quaint Highland sports, the women are attractive and their dress is fashionable. The "Oxford party" (I, 11), who are visiting the Highlands on a reading holiday, are characterised as young, intelligent, brave and energetic. Everything is metaphorically ebullient. The images which Clough employs at this stage of the poem are similarly splendid and felicitous. There is the "Morn, in yellow and white, ... broadening out from the mountains" (II, 1), "a glory of daisies, a glory again of carnations" (II, 186), and the "perfection of water, / Picture-like beauty, seclusion sublime" (III, 56-7). In this, Clough's first published poem, we see him emblematised his own youth and exuberance in the splendour and vitality of nature. He embeds within the images of the summer countryside his own seemingly endless summer. Friendship, camaraderie, good food and wine, the "longing delicious" (II, 46) prompted by the presence of beautiful women, all heighten this sensation. However, in this first part of the poem particularly, Clough's emotional and artistic naivety is apparent. His symbolism is clichéd. He evokes a series of trite classical emblems as he describes a "golden morning" (III, 1), a "bare-limbed ... Apollo" (III, 76), and "Hesperus, star of the evening" (III, 67). At this stage, Clough's poetic form is similarly laboured. His wordy fusion of image and narrative is heightened by the length of his lines. Overall

his verse is, at this point, very discernibly Romantic. Nature is intrinsically perfect; meditative sequestration is the most desirable state of bliss. During the composition of this poem, however, something begins to change in Clough's writing.

At the beginning of the poem, Clough's depiction of an idyllic landscape allows him to formulate and evoke a desirable and ideal present. However, as the poem progresses, the illusion of complete felicity, predicated upon trite emblems and an unrealistic happiness, starts to fade and a plainer, harsher reality emerges. Clough begins to throw off his stale Romanticism and release his own proto-Modernism. He no longer fictionalises his emotions by burying them within the conventions of idyll or pastoral, as the imagery and symbolism already noted suggest. Rather than suppress his hopes and fears within this paradigm, he chooses to fix them to certain appropriate emblems and therefore make his own feelings valid and true. Clough's use of symbolism then moves beyond the simple and conventional, the narrow and tired, to become more characteristically complex, loaded and multifarious. As the landscape becomes wilder and less verdant, so Clough's verse becomes harder and more powerful. In the "craggy point" (III, 72) and "rocky ledge" (III, 73) of Tober-na-Vuolich, Clough embeds both his artistic dissatisfaction with Romanticism, and his practical dissatisfaction with work and life. Romantic poetry itself idealises the harsh and inhospitable in nature, but Clough, appropriating and modifying this, makes his crags sites of inhumanity and destruction rather than wonder. One of the Oxford group, Hobbes, is here dehumanised. He is described as a "quadruped" (III, 61) when he leaps from the rocks and his exertions on them are "overbold" (III, 60) and harmful. Here the rocks are presented as symbols of madness and pain, not of inspiration and as objects of reverence. At the same time, Clough also makes the granite cliffs and ledges a symbol of burdening; if one attempts to escape them one is transformed and broken. In this way the Scottish rocks become

imprisoning shackles, like the stone which Sisyphus was forced eternally to push up a mountain only for it to fall back down again. This has this century become a prevalent emblem of the plight of modern humanity. When *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* was written Clough was in his final, unhappy year at Oriel. The drudgery of his work, transposed initially into the poem in a way that buries and disguises it — in a way that is unrealistically bright and optimistic like much Romanticism; that resorts to cliché in order to suppress a deeper personal reality — becomes harsh and real as the poem progresses and Clough begins to unearth a new, honest, prospective and proto-Modernist poetic vision. Thereafter, images such as "the dissolute city" (IV, 155), "public gas-lights" (IV, 158), "pavement" (IV, 161) and "mist" rather than sunshine (VI, 1) come to invade the poem. "Destruction" and "helplessness" (IV, 169), expressed through the "smiting hand" (IV, 173) of society, exemplify Clough's unhappy state. It is on acknowledging this that Clough's voice becomes sincere and truthful, becomes definitively Modernist.

In the course of writing *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*, Clough discovers certain important attributes of the proto-Modernist poetic. His symbols now derive from the natural, the visible and modern, world around him, rather than from that of convention. He makes his symbols his own — rich and powerful, and often mythologically significant, as the "mythical method" requires — yet he does not let them disrupt and distort the narrative shape of his poem. *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* lends itself as readily to a straightforward, plot-based reading as it does to a reading founded on the symbol and employing the techniques of New Criticism. In contrast with Romanticism, which he is able to move beyond, Clough seeks to infuse his verse with attributes which are more relevant, and true to a contemporary view of life. His anticipation of the Modernist use of the image and its symbols, as fundamental but unobtrusive elements in the

constitution of narrative, is just one way in which he attempts this.

Because the Modernist symbol is generally private and introjective — it is typically formulated by the individual, seeks only to express that individual's character, and is therefore obscure, multifarious, and open to almost limitless interpretation — Clough, by frequently constructing his text around this version of the symbol, makes his poetry increasingly subjective and personal. Clough's poetry, like that of the Symbolist poets who began to emerge in Europe towards the end of his lifetime, takes as the basis of its construction both the public and personal significances of the emblem. Like T.S. Eliot, who records his own debt to the Symbolists in his essays "Baudelaire" and "Talk on Dante", Clough packs his poetry with both the familiar image and some privately-wrought meaning in order to build the symbolic structure of his verse. In this way his personal significances expand and proliferate and his poetry becomes identifiably introjective and "writerly". For Clough, poetry need no longer simply record or instruct, as the realist Victorian novel and much concomitant poetry seeks to do, but should challenge and widen our expectations of the world we are given through literature. If it should record, however, the poem must do so only in a manner appropriate to, and reflective of, the discord and dislocation apparent in modern life. While his, like all, satire assumes a didactic purpose, much of Clough's verse is notable for its exclusive symbolism and obscure or eclectic reference. It is through this exclusivity that Clough's verse betrays its formulation in the submerged consciousness of the private self. Clough, like the Modernists after him, looks inwards in order to find his subject; he takes the real world and, by encapsulating it within himself, hammers it into an idiosyncratic mirror of all of humanity. Because the visible, realist, objective point of view seems incapable of adequately depicting the true nature of the universe, Clough turns towards his own reality, his own mind

and its ethics, attitudes and prejudices, in order to forge an apposite and parallel individual reality. While much Victorian verse hopes to capture the "spirit of the age", making it collective and universal, Clough seeks only to depict his own sense of being. For him it is the performance of the brain, as it struggles to observe and understand, that shapes, and eventually becomes (in the ethos and logos of "Dipsychus", for example) Clough's primary thematic. The buried significances of the "mythical method", the hidden metaphorical wealth that infuses each of his images and symbols, exemplify this in Clough's verse. Unlike the "impersonative" mode which came to dominate the Victorian poetic, the mode of imitation and authorial self-effacement characterised by Browning's dramatic monologue and Tennyson's allegory, Clough's poetry instead displays those dominant traits of modern artistic self-expression: introjection and subjectivity.

Within the tomes of Modernism lie the personal symbols which each writer has contributed. For Yeats these include Byzantium, Ben Bulbin, Coole Park and his famous country home, the Norman tower at Thoor Ballylee. In Eliot, these can be exemplified by the presence in "The Lovesong of J. Alfred Prufrock" of the St. Louis furniture store which he visited as a boy. Again, in *Four Quartets*, Eliot's self-significant symbolism is evident in his evocation of the Massachusetts rocks which lend their name to the third part of the poem, "Dry Salvages", or in "East Coker", where the Faber publishing house in which he worked is surreptitiously evoked. In Clough's poetry we are able to recognise a similar set of submerged personal symbols as they create and transform his meanings, make them introjective.

Already I have examined the deeper significances which consume Clough's description of Venice in "Dipsychus", but in Naples Clough formulates a more idiosyncratic and personal web of symbolism, one which may be read biographically. When, in "Easter Day II", Clough writes that "I with my secret self held communing" (2), he invokes his own private self and

symbols in order to personally "create" and interpret the concerns that press in on him in both "Easter Day II" and its earlier, companion, poem, "Easter Day". In these two poems, Clough explores the nature of God and the possibility of Christian salvation through a series of public as well as private symbols. Writing, in "Easter Day", that "With fiercer heat than flamed above my head / My heart was hot within me" (2-3), Clough not only evokes his agitation and doubt concerning the existence of God, but embeds this sensation in his personal experience of the political situation in Naples, where he was resident at the time of its composition. As its epigraph points out, "Easter Day" was written in Naples over Easter 1849, during the Liberal Revolutions. By including this epigraph Clough allows us to see his poem as he does, to replace its public meaning, which buries Clough's part in the historical situation of the poem beneath the familiar symbolism of doubt and disaster, with the veiled and exclusive private significances which Clough attaches to it. The "heat", "flame" and "ferocity" (2) that rage about the city demand, from Clough, a very private form of expression. For him, these images evoke the rifle and canon fire, the flames and destruction, that rained about the lodgings where he spent the many weeks of fighting. The power of this image, and the significances of fear, hopelessness and inhumanity which it contains for the poet, are evinced by its concrete and emblematic recurrence in "Amours de Voyage". He reveals the emotional depth of this, his personal emblem of despair and cruelty, again when he describes Claude sheltering from harm in a Roman hotel in 1849. Clough himself shifted from Naples to Rome during a lull in the fighting. Here Claude expresses all of the dread and despondency which the poet himself felt during the period of his enforced and dangerous confinement.

Clough continues to present his proto-Modernist preference for the personal and subjective element of the symbol, and of poetry itself, throughout the "Easter Day" poems. Naples is sparingly (Imagistically) represented in

"Easter Day" by the "huts and boats and inland native shore" (117) of the Tyrrhenian sea and by the ominous and threatening clifftops — "Ye hills, fall on us, and ye mountains cover" (67) — from which the revolutionary army besieged the city. The war, which he is most concerned to emblematised, finds further expression in the "folds of linen round each wounded limb" (99) that Clough evokes in the third section. Throughout the poems images associated with battle, such as "death", "tomb" and "corruption", preponderate. These images are often publicly embedded in the legend of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection, as is "each wounded limb", and seek to relate this story to the suffering of the ordinary person, here represented by Clough himself. Clough reconciles the public and private, the objective and subjective, in this way. He makes the Gospels, with their description of Christ's martyrdom, his "objective correlative", yet, within it, submerges the personal significances which he attaches to this. Clough formulates a private network of symbolism, but does not let it "obtrude". We can consequently read the "Easter Day" poems both publicly, as expressions of Christian doubt, and, introjectively, as documentary accounts of Clough's experiences in Naples. Thus, when Clough insists that it is "silence, which is best" (153), we can sense both his need for spiritual contemplation and his frustration with the nerve-jangling noises of war and deep desire for peace and stillness to return. Again, this is an image that is outwardly simple. It only gains its full symbolic force when we read beyond the obvious and look more deeply into Clough's own subjective and emotional attachment to it. "Easter Day II" has a different tone from that of its predecessor; it was written by Clough on his return to London. Consequently, this poem speaks from a perspective that is shaped by relief and happiness. The poem is bright and its outlook positive, but it is only the work of a moment. Clough's experiences in Naples return, to create the emblems and fashion the themes which infuse much of his later verse. Symbols of danger, helplessness and dread persist

in the poems as a personal emblem, and a reminder of his 1849 Italian trip (the revolution in Rome in "Amours de Voyage" or the threatening carnival in Venice in "Dipsychus", for example).

Like the Modernists, Clough derives from the objects and events of his lifetime certain recurrent private symbols. Clough makes many of his emblems subjective, full of personal significance. In his poetry, he forges these symbols into precious nuggets of highly-charged meaning. Clough holds them within himself and exposes them only reluctantly, as if they were only able to surface during the most intense moments of self-examination and introjection. For him, as for the Modernists, it is the individual and internal that is most interesting and important. Anachronistically, Clough rejects the authorial self-effacement and public rhetoric which tend to characterise Victorian verse. Like Yeats, who made his tower a symbol of isolation and entrapment during the Irish conflict in "Meditations in Time of Civil War", Clough constructs his hotel room in "Easter Day" as a lonely and vulnerable prison. Like Yeats's poem too, Clough's "Easter Day" verses present a private lamentation on humanity's capacity for cruelty and suffering and need for some spiritual salvation from it.

In "Easter Day", as elsewhere, Clough not only embeds the symbols of the poem within himself, introjecting them, but by transposing onto a particular landscape his own thoughts or feelings, gives them a concomitant actual and physical representation. We have seen this already in Clough's personification of the Neapolitan hills, where they are depicted as "falling" to "cover". Here they express Clough's personal sense of danger, fear and entrapment. Again, this technique presages the work of the Symbolist poets of the nineteenth century and was appropriated and disseminated only later by the Modernists. For Clough, it is the modern city that comes most to emblematisé his mental and emotional state. Even in a poem as seemingly removed from the urban

environment as *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich*, Clough cannot resist including a reference to what troubles him most, "the dissolute city" (IV, 155). Like T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, many of Clough's poems — most notably "To the Great Metropolis" and "In the Great Metropolis" — present the modern city as a physically and morally repugnant human construct. In "Recent English Poetry" he describes "the unnumbered difficulties, contradictions, and corruptions of the heated and crowded, busy, vicious, and inhuman town" (*Prose Works* 146). In Clough's verse the industrial city is typically denoted in this way: by dirt and filth, hardness and colourlessness, degradation and corruption. Within these symbolic significances, Clough embeds his own anger and unhappiness, his fear and dread. The despoliated city transforms into an emblematic expression of Clough's own disturbed thoughts and feelings. It becomes the site in which Clough can most readily embed his awareness of social and spiritual degradation. The city comes to represent both Clough's personal alienation and a wider break-down of the community and its traditional systems of support. The "map" of the industrial city drawn in Clough's poetry becomes a symbolic, introjective representation of Clough's own heart and head. As Clough transforms the channels of his mind into the streets of the sordid city, the scenes emblematically typical of the modern urban environment become inseparable from the synapses of his brain. Clough repeatedly exchanges object and meaning, meaning and object — his theme and the symbols with which it is drawn — in his introjective treatment of place.

As we have seen in the "Easter Day" poems, Clough frequently makes the outward and public a signifier of his own private concerns. We have seen this in *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* also, where Clough transforms the craggy Highlands of Scotland into pictorial representations of his own dread and despair, or where the mist that begins to envelop the poem at its temporal centre becomes an emblem of trial

and darkness, one that is eventually transcended. Clough's anticipation of modern poetic introjection is, however, perhaps most typically illustrated by the presence of the industrial city in "To the Great Metropolis". Here, Clough transposes his own sense of social and spiritual deterioration onto a city that is depicted as increasingly dirty and corrupt. Clough's feelings of spiritual degradation find a symbolic expression in the city that is tainted with the filth of the "railway" (13), of "Traffic ... travelling much" (1-2), and with over-population. It is with suitable irony that Clough writes later, in "Ye flags of Piccadilly", that:

Ye flags of Piccadilly,
Which I hated so, I vow
I could wish with all my heart
You were underneath me now!

(21-24)

In this poem Clough describes how the ship on which he is travelling is battered by fierce winds and how he now wishes that he stood once more upon the flagstones of Piccadilly. Even the sordid city is better than the dangerous and "squally" (17) sea, Clough reluctantly, but desperately admits. Clough is here obvious and literal about his distaste for the modern city, but, as "To the Great Metropolis" indicates, his personal tribulations are frequently manifested in a personal and introjective way. Clough need not laboriously explicate his own complex emotions, in the manner characteristic of much Romanticism, but, in the dirty and corrupt city, is able to find a landscape onto which he can metaphorically transpose his own despair, and in a way that is concise and accurate. In "To the Great Metropolis", as elsewhere, Clough's internal fears and external situation become inseparable metaphoric reflections of each other. Unlike many Victorian writers and artists, who frequently sought to bury the present in the

depiction of an idealised past, Clough allows the modern world to emerge and infuse his verse. For him the modern world is an inherent and unavoidable part of himself, and consequently demands a sincere form of poetic expression. For this reason, Clough endows the city with a personal web of symbolism that is an introjective expression of his own thoughts and feelings. The modern city and its landscape are so much a part of himself that Clough cannot suppress them. When Clough looks for himself he does not find it in the past, as many of his peers seem to, but in his immediate surroundings and in the present. His viewpoint is significantly prospective and subjective. Like the Modernists, whom he anticipates, Clough's poetic manner is obscure, introjective, modern and true-to-life. The forms and rhythms which Clough incorporates in his verse also reflect his concern for the rejuvenation made possible by the modern.

In "Prolegomena", Ezra Pound writes that "a vast number of subjects cannot be precisely, and therefore not properly rendered in symmetrical forms" (*Essays* 9). He continues, stating that "there is a 'fluid' as well as a 'solid' content" (*Essays* 9) to form. For Pound, "form" includes the structure of the individual line and collective stanza as well as a conception of the rhythmical and metrical unit. In his poetry Clough seldom subscribes to a formulaic pattern that is either "symmetrical" or conventional. Rather, his forms are characteristically distinctive and unique. Like much else, Clough rejects the staleness, the formulaic sameness, that he sees in the work of some of his contemporaries. Anticipating the Modernist appeal to *Make it New*, Clough chooses to invent his own forms, or appropriate and reconfigure others, in order to create a poetic structure that is necessarily modern. While some other Victorians also develop their own distinctive poetic forms, Clough does so with a unique and acute vision of the modern world in mind. He seeks, like the Modernists, to specifically record the phenomenon of modern locomotion. Because the contemporary world is such a rapidly

moving, multifariously expanding place, the structural order reflected in many traditional verse forms seems inappropriate. The mutable modern world, if it is to be portrayed accurately, demands mutable modern forms. The changeable, the oscillating, the inharmonious, are desirable elemental traits. By accepting that disorder and chaos are the inherent state of being, Clough shows his antithesis to the prevalent Victorian hope — in Matthew Arnold's doctrine of "absolutes" particularly — of preserving order at all costs. Like the Modernists, Clough accepts that uncertainty is the only thing of which we are sure. Clough allows this belief to inform the formal construction of his verse. In Tennyson and Arnold we are able to see implemented poetic and metrical forms that are often tightly prescribed. With the possible exceptions of Browning and Hopkins, themselves in some way proto-Modernists, metre, rhyme-scheme and stanza grouping are often repetitively and rigidly governed in Victorian poetry. Clough, while retaining some traditional structural elements, injects his poetry with a formulaic freedom that is quite unique among the Victorians. He does not contain and restrict but, rather, gives expression to the rampant and diverse nature of the modern world. Like Pound, he constructs his forms with a "fluid" as well as a "solid" content.

Throughout his poetry Clough implements a variety of formulaic and rhythmical poetic structures. Like Yeats, who wrote that "if I can be sincere and make my language natural ... [I may] be a great poet" (*Autobiographies* 103), Clough sought to imitate and convey the irregular rhythms of the real world in his verse. Although he most often works in hexameters, Clough frequently departs from the artificial rigidity of speech which English prosody enforces, exercising a poetic practice which he acknowledges as self-consciously "experimental" in one of his notebooks (qtd. in *The Poems of Clough* ed. Lowry *et al* xi). In "Dipsychus", for example, Clough's line length habitually fluctuates between the short, clipped octosyllable and the languorous, expansive hexameter.

Within the first fourteen lines of "Dipsychus" Clough already implements the three predominant modes of versification in English. The first sestet of the poem is pentametric, the next is in metrically varied hexameters. The couplet which follows is only four feet in length. By incorporating such a variety of line lengths, Clough creates a rhythm which is uneven and syncopated, in which the breath is stopped and stilted, which mimics the diverse character of spoken English. Just as Clough, in the words of Eliot, sought to represent the "ordinary man's experience", so he also attempts to capture the ordinary man's voice. While Wordsworth, for example, attempted the same in his own time, the rhythms of the world had changed dramatically by 1860. The vagaries of speech, tone and dialect are just one part of the widespread multifariousness which Modernism embraces and seeks to express. "Dipsychus", itself, moves like a verbal roller-coaster, hurling its reader from one rhythmic extreme to the other. Our tongues seize and our voices stutter as we struggle to enunciate what the poem demands. The presence of eight, ten, and twelve syllable lines is complicated still further by the prose which begins and ends the poem, and by the existence of, for instance, the trimetric French folk song which comes at the conclusion of scene II (44-48). In the prologue to "Dipsychus" Clough warns his readers of his idiosyncratic rhythms when he has the uncle say that "nothing is more disagreeable than to say [to scan] a line over two, or, it may be, three or four times, and at last not be sure that there are not three or four ways of reading, each as good and as much intended as another". Clough foresees the unfavourable critical reception which he is to receive for his disjointed rhythms, and pre-emptively and ironically dismisses it. The "instructed ear" which the nephew describes subsequently is not irreconcilable with the cadences which Clough incorporates. Rather than perpetuate the trite and conventional forms of versification, Clough wishes to teach his peers a new, varied, modern way of listening.

The formulaic irregularity of Clough's syllabics is intensified by the disruptive metre with which they are often drawn. Clough seldom retains one constant metre throughout any given poem, but instead has his cadences fluctuate and syncopate. The collocation of various types of stressed feet within the same line or group of lines serves to problematise the reading of each stanza. In the following passage from *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* we can see this cacophony played out:

Áll the greàt / éempty / stréets are / floóded with /
 broádening / cleárness,
 Whích, with / ál, by in / scrútable / símul / táneous /
 áccess
 Pérmeàtes / fár and / piérces to the / véry / céllars /
 lýing in
 Nárrow / hígh bàck / láne, and / cóurt, and / álley of /
 álleys: —
 Hé that goes / fóρθ to his / wálks, whìle / spéedìng / to
 the / súburb,
 Seés sìghts / ónly / peáceful and / púre; as / lábourers /
 sèttling
 Slówly to / wórks, in their / límbs the / língering /
 sweétness of / slúmber

(IX, 85-91)

Here, we can see Clough's irregular metre very clearly. His rhythm fluctuates and oscillates in order to imitate the variance of ordinary spoken English, reflecting the chaos which he, as a proto-Modernist, recognises as inherent in everything. Clough's syllabics are hexametrical and his predominant foot is trochaic, yet his trochees are frequently overwhelmed by the disjointed rhythm which he cultivates. In the first two feet of the first line, for example, Clough includes an extra stressed syllable. This gives us at least three

equally viable options, besides that which I have annotated, when scanning this part of the line. The second foot of the following line reverses this. Here Clough, rather, includes an extra unstressed syllable, forming a dactyl. The contrast between the two gives a syncopated cadence to the couplet; the initial strong beat is displaced by the weak beat which follows in the second line, creating a sense of subsidence and diminution. In the extraordinary fifth line of this passage, Clough implements no fewer than four different stressed feet types within the same hexametrical line. The line begins with a pair of dactyls. These are followed by a pair of doubly stressed spondees, then a doubly unstressed pyrrhic. The line ends with Clough's characteristic trochee. We stumble over this line as if it were a corrugated road, continually stuttering and tripping on the rhythmic ridges and dips which Clough creates. In exercising such a deliberately "experimental" metrical form, Clough challenges his peers to listen to the rhythms of the real world. He wishes them to abandon their regressive search for steadfast and artificial rules, hoping instead that they will embrace the variance, and potentiality, of a life which is now so much removed from the stabilities of the past. Clough captures a new set of sounds, the cacophony of a modern city with its myriad of people and multitude of clanging machines, as he anticipates the "unsymmetrical" rhythms of the Modernist poets. Like Pound, Clough has a "solid", metrical component to his verse as well as a "fluid", irregular one; he overlays his "solid" hexameters and trochees with a number of rhythmical variations.

As we have seen, Clough anticipates many of the formulaic and stylistic poetic techniques which the Modernists were later to refine. He advocates a verse form that is compact, exact and pure. His primary concern is for the image and its scrupulous usage. Clough embeds in the delineation of his image a metaphoric significance that is rich and vast. By encapsulating within the external an emotional complex that is powerful and effusive, he anticipates one of the key

formative attributes of modern poetry, the "objective correlative". Clough's use of the symbol, as a key component of the "objective correlative", again presages that of Modernism. He takes his emblems from the modern world, and presents them in a way that ensures that they do not obtrude on the capabilities of the "ordinary man". However, Clough's symbol, like that of the Modernists, is simultaneously obscure, private and introjective. Clough buries his own meanings within an image that can be exclusive and "writerly", often transposing them onto a landscape that reflects his own emotional state. Clough's forms and rhythms betray a similar concern for the faithful recording of the modern human experience. Like the Modernists, Clough makes himself a messenger in an "avant garde" that attempts to topple the reversionism that threatens to stagnate all cultural endeavour. In his persistent preoccupation with the personal and subjective he also betrays an awareness of both a private and public identity that is increasingly unstable and shifting; Clough develops a definitively Modernist view of the self.

Chapter 4

Selfhood, *Estrangement* , and the Problematic of Human Identity

Clough, Alienation, and the Modernist Self

In his introduction to *The Major Victorian Poets: Tennyson, Browning, Arnold*, William Buckler states that the Victorians "were aware that they had inherited a psychologically and spiritually dismembered world They knew intensely, soulfully, that some force had been set in motion that had shattered into a million atoms the coherence of the Christian era" (xi). Turn-of-the-century Romanticism had introduced into literature the idea of a world torn by new and destructive human impulses. These impulses were initiated by democratic and industrial political and social revolution. Following Enlightenment Humanism, men and women now sat squarely at the centre of contemporary thought and speculation. The principles upon which burgeoning political democracy was built — personal freedom and the popular vote — came to typify a new preoccupation with the role of the individual that captured the spirit of the time. These inter-related trends combined to problematise the conventional definition of the individual's role within society

and prompted the artists of the period to explore the issues to which this realisation lent itself. What, they wondered, became of one as one's traditional sense of identity began to crumble? The ideal of the single self — meditative, energetic, isolated in nature, but revelling in this isolation, inherently free — exemplified the Romantic answer, soon becoming a ubiquitous motif in the work of this period. The figure of Wordsworth presented in "Lines Written a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey" comes to embody this image most precisely in our own literary imagination.

As the century progressed and society continued to change, however, the figure of the individual became increasingly problematic. He or she no longer simply represented a desirable spiritual ideal but became, instead, a present reality, one shaded by loneliness and suffering. The society which had once embraced and helped define each human being within itself continued to shatter, leaving each of its individual component parts to drift alone in a state of emotional and spiritual alienation. While the Socialism devised by Karl Marx, and first promulgated in *Capital* of 1867, sought to recollectivise humanity, Marx's negation of the individual will eventually spelt the death of his political vision. Among the Victorians a sense of the peril of one's personal identity, threatened with isolation, despoliation and collapse, was more typical than a faith in a cohesive Marxist ideal. In 1852 Matthew Arnold wrote that "[I am] Weary of myself, and sick of asking / What I am, and what I ought to be" ("Self-Dependence", 1-2). In this poem Arnold more than expresses the position of the youth at the moment when he or she must choose which path is to be taken in life; he also asks the questions fundamental to all of humanity: "What am I?" and "What should I be?" Arnold speaks for his whole society when articulating his deep sense of fear and uncertainty regarding his place in the changing world. The "darkling plain / Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight" (35-36) from Arnold's "Dover Beach" becomes an apt emblem of the

human condition at this time. With one's traditional sense of self increasingly eroded, unstable, and disintegrating, and with nothing familiar left to assume its place in life, Arnold and the Victorians suffered from a personal dissolution which was both overwhelming and widespread. This sensation soon found expression in the techniques of self-representation formulated by the writers of the period.

In the English poetry of the 1830s and '40s we begin to see a new artistic preoccupation, a new thematic orientation, develop from the precepts of High Romanticism. The subjectivity which the Romantic author displays in his meditative and analytical introspection begins to transform. In Victorian literature we see this concern for the troubled human identity expressed, instead, through a wider examination of character and the subjective self. This trait is often delineated in Victorian literary studies by the term the "impersonative mode" (Buckler xvi). The "impersonative mode" is identifiable by its concentration on the individual personality and the complex persona. The most obvious example of this trend in Victorian literature is Browning's dramatic monologue. Here Browning seeks to build his protagonists as individual personae and, in this way, empowers himself to explore the feelings and motives of his characters without unnecessary authorial intrusion or obfuscation. Each character inadvertently reveals his or her own sense of self as he or she chooses certain courses of action and fulfils certain poetic destinies. Invariably, the protagonists which Browning borrows or invents function at a point of personal and intellectual crisis. They exemplify the flawed and mutable nature of the individual as his or her conception of selfhood is attacked. They reflect, also, the Victorian preoccupation with the identity threatened with destruction.

In this self-conscious and prevalent concern, on the part of the major Victorian poets, for the single character and his or her often troubled psyche, we can see the germ of the

Modernist alienated self begin to develop. In Eliot's adaptation of the dramatic monologue (in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" most of all), in Pound's "personae" and Yeats's "masks", we are able to see the influence of Victorian alienation on the Modernist *Zeitgeist*. However the Modernists's sense of self-collapse and alienation was fundamentally different from that of the Victorians, as were the majority of the techniques which they developed to express it. By anticipating many of these, Clough proves once again that he is more of a Modernist than a Victorian.

For the Modernists, writing in the early twentieth century, what was encompassed by the concepts of individuality, personality and the self had altered greatly during the previous century. Contemporary psycho-analysis, the expansion of scientific and mechanist technologies, and the suppression of identity which Imperialism implicitly represented all combined to create a world even more removed from its stable, theocratic origins than before. The world became more accessible as methods of travel improved and encounters with difference began to occur more frequently. Otherness and disparity soon became a socio-psychological normality. Distance and removal, exile, were sensations common to those who regularly met, and struggled with, difference while away from home. Among the great, expatriate exponents of Modernism, exile forged a sense of dislocation and disturbance which inevitably found its way into their work. For Clough, who, like Pound and Eliot, divided his time between England, Europe and America, this was also true. The wider deterioration of their respective societies was reflected in the ever-increasing complexity and fragmentation felt by them as individuals. An almost Faustian sense of loss and displacement became commonplace. Human communication was problematised, and once accepted truths were discarded. The bridge between subjective experience and the objective world collapsed in the face of what now seemed uncontrollably indistinct and unfathomable. The urge

for a feeling of stability that is never fully attainable persisted, separating Modernism from the Existentialism which came later. Pound gives a voice to the new, subjective order of things when he writes that "Humanity is a collection of individuals, not a *whole* divided into segments or units. The only things that matter are the things which make individual life more interesting" (*Prose* 169-70). When Pound further asserts that "If a man's work requires him to live in exile, let him suffer, or enjoy, his exile gladly" (*Patria Mia* 47), he articulates what is the inescapable fate of modern humanity. In literature, the conception of a human identity that is inherently unknowable leads to an attack, on the part of the Modernist author, on the classical conventions of plot and character.

Because the modern writer is now alert to the masks which problematise human self-knowledge, a need to present the disparate nature of the individual and society is founded. In order to capture the whole, the vast number of constituent local possibilities must be evoked. In works such as James Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* or Pound's *The Cantos* diversity and heterogeneity are celebrated through multiple representations of, and encounters with, difference. Dipsychus's dialogue with the Spirit is a proto-typical example. The presentation of the individual that results is notable for its variety and lack of coherence. This is exemplified by the Modernist modification of the dramatic monologue and formulation of the internal monologue and stream-of-consciousness, seen particularly in the work of Eliot, Joyce and Virginia Woolf. Here, the many private interpretations of the self are seen in the way in which the mind wanders and the protagonist's sense of self constantly alters and fluctuates. The protagonist is frequently as unknowable to him or herself as to ourselves or those around him or her. Not surprisingly, myths of both unwitting destruction and the quest for a new truth come to dominate the Modernist narrative. Rather than regurgitate traditional poetic structures or motifs, the Modernist writer seeks to

make his or her text reflect the real, individually conceived world. As we shall see, Clough shares with the Modernists a preoccupation with many of these themes and techniques.

Fundamental to the Modernist conception of personal identity were the psychological discoveries of Sigmund Freud. It is the ideas which Freud introduces to the contemporary imagination which most definitively differentiate the twentieth-century sense of self from that of the Victorian period. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud formulates a psycho-analytical paradigm that is predicated upon the indecipherable and hidden. Beyond our surface comprehension, he suggests, lies always darkness, the unconscious. Freud's proposal of the unconscious inevitably raises questions imperative to the nature of individual identity. If so much of who we are is unknowable even to ourselves, then all certainties of character falter and the gulf between human beings widens. Freud's influence on the thinking of the period is enormous. In literature, the Modernist author is now forced to struggle with a personal lack, a scarcity of private or public knowledge, which impacts on his or her ability to represent either plot or character. As a result, the text becomes increasingly introjective and "writerly". Because it now appears futile to attempt to capture the essence of others, the Modernist author retreats into him or herself. Shade and obscurity, the private monologue and the personal symbol, come to dominate the new poetic. In Clough's poetry we have already discerned some of these attributes. Together with his anticipation of certain fundamental elements of the Modernist self, Clough displays an awareness of something which approaches Freud's conception of the unconscious.

In his essay, "Recent English Poetry", Clough conveys a basic sense of what can be described as the unconscious — " ... be true to that proper interior self" (*Prose Works* 153), he states — which is sustained in his poetry. Just as Barbara Hardy, in an article entitled "Clough's Self-consciousness",

suggests that "In a pre-Freudian world, Clough is painfully alert to the masks which desires can wear" (256), so Clough also anticipates other aspects of the inner self found in Freudian psycho-analysis. In "Blank misgivings of a creature moving about in worlds not realised", from his second volume, *Ambarvalia*, Clough writes that:

Excitements come, and act and speech
Flow freely forth; — but no,
Nor they, nor ought beside can reach
The buried world below.

(V, 13-16)

In this poem, Clough betrays an awareness of the submerged and hidden self. He probes the unconscious, struggling to see and comprehend himself as he attempts to surface from the social constrictions of the external world. Clough seeks to strip away the paraphernalia of the objectified universe and uncover the subjective: who or what he truly is. This particular passage, which is located pivotally at the poem's centre, illustrates how the methods of communication common to the outside world continually fail to pierce the real, interior self. Still the internal remains indecipherable. "The buried world below" evokes the geography of the spirit, and Clough laments the fact that this world seems always unreachable, both by himself and others. Human contact falters when confronted with the innately ungraspable. "Blank Misgivings ..." is a poem of artistic introjection, a poem describing the search for self-knowledge; it formulates its techniques of self-discovery by anticipating and delineating the workings of the unconscious mind.

The use of the word "creature" in the title of the poem connotes both creation and wretchedness. Because the "Blank Misgivings" of the poem can be seen to describe his own anxiety and doubt, Clough is himself the pitiable and

unfortunate modern "creature". Humanity is made by God "in His image", but now, in the epoch through which Clough lives, torn and seemingly shunned by Him. The paradox of this position, where Clough the individual is at once an autonomous creature and another's creation, reflects his irreconcilable duality, his disturbed emotional state throughout the poem. His "Sails [are] rent, / And rudder broken, — reason impotent, — / Affections all unfixed" (I, 4-6), as he describes it in the opening section. For Clough, the absence of God necessitates a radical reappraisal of his position in the universe.

Like the Modernist, who seeks a panacea for his or her feeling of personal isolation, Clough asks (in II, 14) "When [will the] ill we cannot quell ... be no more?" He emblematises his alienation in "The bareness of the desert place" (IX, 30) — "desolate and bare" (IX, 41), "withered ... and dead" (IX, 45), littered with "dry bones" (IX, 55) — and in the "strange garden [in which he is] left awhile alone" (VI, 2), exiled. In a world in which communication with others is so problematic, everyone might as well be "dead" and the individual the only lonely survivor. Clough himself invents this metaphor towards the end of the poem:

Yet marks where human hand hath been,
Bare house, unsheltered village, space
Of ploughed and fenceless tilth between
(Such aspect as methinks may be
In some half-settled colony),
From Nature vindicate the scene;
A wide and yet disheartening view,
A melancholy world.

(IX, 14-21)

Clough makes the desolate, unpopulated world a reflection of his own personal isolation and collapsed feeling of human

kinship. While elements of the human world persist, the absence of a human presence makes this a disturbing landscape. To live in personal isolation is to live in a sort of spiritual twilight zone from which there is no escape. In the final section of the poem, Clough comforts himself with the knowledge that "higher holier things" (X, 1) await us in heaven, but his belief in a Christian redemption remains unconvincing. Salvation is, here, more of a well-worn topos than a genuine, revivifying force. Perhaps a more significant desire, returning to the unconscious, is Clough's articulation of something almost Freudian:

O kind protecting Darkness! as a child
 Flies back to bury in his mother's lap
 His shame and his confusion, so to thee,
 O Mother Night, come I!

(VIII, 1-4)

Here Clough articulates the archetypal Oedipal return to the womb. Clough's journey in the unconscious has exposed his fears and given them a universal metaphoric expression: the return to pre-natal security. In "Natura Naturans", also from *Ambarvalia*, Clough continues to explore the world of the alienated individual, shaped, as his examination is, by some conception of the troubled identity made possible by the germ of the unconscious.

While outwardly appearing to be something of a love poem, "Natura Naturans" in fact explodes the Romantic myth of love prevalent in Victorian literature. Instead, "Natura Naturans" is a love poem for the new, despoliated and shattered age. In it, Clough, the speaker, observes a woman on an omnibus or train journey. As the journey progresses, Clough finds himself more and more drawn to her youth and beauty. He imagines what she is like, he contemplates her sexually, but never speaks a word to her. Eventually, Clough

disembarks from the vehicle and is left with only the husk of an image of her. While the poem attempts to idealise the relationship which he has formed with this woman — it is somehow beyond love, it is characterised by "a power unknown" (14), it is a communion that is untainted and pure — its premise remains vitiate and hollow. Clough gives expression to the kind of debased level of human interaction that the new, fragmentary age enforces. This is evident in the second stanza, when Clough writes that:

... [I] know not to this day
 If gold or jet her girlish hair,
 If black, or brown, or lucid-grey
 Her eye's young glance:

(18-21)

Clough's "love" is undercut by the lack of attention which he seems to have paid to the real woman. The fact that he knows nothing of her is reinforced by his lack of knowledge of her physical appearance. She is repeatedly objectified, a "shyly ripening" (35) body that exists only for the construction of his fantasies. The woman is barely individualised; she is a degraded ideal that is as ethereal as the "mistiest dawn" (81) in which she disappears. Clough implicitly describes the nature of the modern human relationship as he relates the action of the poem. The impossibility of any true, meaningful mode of interaction is evinced by the couple's failure to actually meet or speak. They, instead, typify the world of the incommunicable mass and the individual consciousness. Their communication is non-existent; it is a figment of the speaker's imagination: "Beside me, — in the car, — she sat, / She spake not, no, nor looked to me" (1-2), Clough writes. Sitting "Beside" her, rather than opposite, the speaker is unable even to look at her properly, to meet her eyes. "She ... looked [not] to me", he is prepared to acknowledge. We do not know if the woman

even noticed Clough. Their fictitious relationship is reinforced by the presence of the modern vehicle, with its connotations of impersonal speed and efficiency, on which they "meet". Their "meeting" is consequently incapable of furthering humanity's collective sense of communion with others. The silent fraudulence of their relationship reflects a greater social and spiritual corruption. "The mystic name of Love" (88) which Clough attempts to capture explodes because of its very mystery, its unbroachability. He takes the Romantic ideal of the "mysterious" and beautiful woman and, in admitting that he truly knows nothing of her, undercuts its elements of ecstasy and fantasy. While Clough attempts to find some sense of kinship and communion in his relationship with this woman, salvaging some community from the ashes of a despoliated and fragmentary world, he knows, in some way, that their connection is little more than a devastating symbol of modern alienation. Clough buries a sad and desperate truth in the superficial excitement of the poem. He belies the overt reality with the greater implications of what he is describing. Clough's poem of alienation shares much with that of T.S. Eliot.

Despite the obvious difference in tone and intent — Eliot is fully aware of what Clough, in "Natura Naturans", only tacitly acknowledges — in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock", Eliot describes a situation not unlike that presented by Clough in his poem. In "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" a very ordinary middle-class man makes his regular visit to the prostitutes at their "muttering retreats" (5). Like the woman in Clough's poem, Eliot's prostitute is not privy to the thoughts that float through the speaker's mind as he sees her and imagines what he would say to her if he could only "truly" speak. Both women are silent objects who exemplify the debased level to which human contact has sunk. In each case the protagonist attempts to communicate meaningfully, but always his efforts falter. Both speakers desire some deeper spiritual communion but the link between them and the women is ungraspable; the bridge to the world of the

individual remains barricaded. We, each of us, inhabit a deep emotional void. In Eliot's poem, the "half-deserted" (4) desolation of the city, its squalor and degradation, characterised by "one-night cheap hotels" (6), reflect the introjected landscape of the isolated individual. Speech is rendered redundant; it is conceived of as limited, pointless: "In the room the women come and go / Talking of Michelangelo" (13-14), Eliot writes. Humanity is incapable of uttering anything other than superficial observations on well-worn subjects. When the speaker of the poem attempts to answer "What is it?" (11) — what does this world say about ourselves? — his final answer is disturbing: "... human voices wake us, and we drown" (148). Here Eliot implies that we are now so removed from one another that mutual understanding is not only damaged, it is impossible. Drowning is Eliot's metaphor for an individual self-reliance that is unwanted, destructive, yet complete and unavoidable. Clough detects this world taking shape in his mind's eye in "Natura Naturans", and when he writes in "Dipsychus":

... Oh, there are hours,
 When love, and faith, and dear domestic ties,
 And converse with old friends, and pleasant walks,
 Familiar faces, and familiar books,
 Study, and art, upliftings into prayer,
 And admiration of the noblest things,
 Seem all ignoble only; all is mean,
 And nought as I would have it.

(X, 64-71)

Clough anticipates the increasingly alienated world that lies before us, just as he anticipates some of the techniques with which this world is drawn in Modernist literature.

Selfhood, *Estrangement* , and the Problematic of Human Identity

Three Incarnations of the Modernist Hero

DIPSYCHUS

Already, during the course of my investigation, we have seen how the personally significant reference, the private symbol and the internal monologue (the unconscious, as it surfaces in the soliloquies of "Dipsychus", for example) — all elements of the "writerly" text — come to denote the world of the individualised self in Modernist literature. By creating characters that are both self-contained and symbolic — that embody the single self, but also typify the modern "everyman" — the Modernist author is able to inaugurate another strategy of expressing and representing alienation in his or her writing. He or she attempts to capture "a common notion, explicit or implicit, of the hero ... who most deserves to be celebrated, remembered, and, if possible, imitated" in the modern world (Auden 84). The Modernist protagonist comes

to embody a social and spiritual desolation, suggesting a personal isolation, that is characteristic of the period. In each of his or her incarnations, the Modernist hero encounters enormous change and upheaval. He or she must battle the dislocation and disturbance which this mutability inevitably fosters. The way in which this dislocation is countered — the ideal modern being that is created as a consequence, as a means of expressing this disturbance as it meets with, and threatens, the human spirit — is represented in Modernist literature by each of several archetypes. Differing interpretations of the true or perfectly adapted Modernist body can be seen in the genesis and construction of each of these characters. Clough, in his premature experience of something akin to twentieth-century alienation, anticipates the nature and significance of many of these otherwise distinctively Modernist figures. He invents several character archetypes which both express and represent his anticipation of the Modernist sensibility. In "Dipsychus", Clough develops a human type that is as universal to modern humanity as he is anathema to the Victorians who first met him.

In "Dipsychus", Dipsychus endures a period of personal dissolution, prompted by his nemesis, the Spirit, which challenges his fundamental sense of self. He examines the trappings of his society and is disturbed at its inadequacy, baseness and hypocrisy. He rejects the ethical repugnance for which it stands, eventually formulating his own contrary set of spiritual and social values. Throughout the first part of "Dipsychus", the title character is depicted as an unworldly idealist, a quixote who is delineated later by the phrase "the over-tender conscience" (Epilogue). Dipsychus curses the hypocrisy of his society, lamenting its vileness and improbity. He interrogates the Utopian fantasy with which it promotes itself and finds it wanting. The possibility of a world devoid of a Christian God's morally governing presence is greeted by Dipsychus with consternation and horror. His belief in the Gospels inspires Dipsychus's refusal to participate in carnival.

He refuses to even look at a prostitute or to fight a duel. At the start of the poem Dipsychus glorifies

... the sweet domestic bonds,
 The matrimonial sanctities; the hopes
 And cares of wedded life; parental thoughts,
 The prattle of young children, the good word
 Of fellow men, the sanction of the law,
 And permanence and habit, that transmute
 Grossness itself to crystal.

(IIA, 79-85)

It is this "crystal", symbolically translucent and pure, with which Dipsychus associates the pre-modern and prelapsarian spirit. However, from Scene VIII onwards, Dipsychus begins to overcome his youthful tenderness, devising a series of precepts which reflect a new, mature awareness of his particular social environment. Dipsychus chooses to live a life of "noble deeds" (VIII, 20), involving an introspection and self-correction, that is contrasted with the familiar worldly objectives of humanity. He eventually attains a clearsightedness whereby he is able both to transcend the base external world which he condemns and also recognise, and identify with, the temptations which it exerts — "Welcome, O world, henceforth; and farewell dreams!" (XIII, 21), he sings in the final scene of the poem. Dipsychus grows to accept the failings inherent in his society, discovering a fresh way of confronting and overcoming them, one which chimes with the methods of Modernism.

While "Dipsychus" has traditionally been interpreted in terms of the Faust myth, in this poem Clough can also be seen to anticipate one of the key character and character development archetypes of Modernist literature. In it, the protagonist is made to view him or herself as somehow beyond the conventions of society. He or she has experienced

a period of disillusionment, one in which the ideal of society and its reality are unable to be reconciled, which destroys his or her faith in any collectivised form of humanity. Consequently, his or her personal sense of fragmentation and isolation is heightened. This period of dislocation, or *estrangement*, which the character endures, eventually prepares the way for a new, modern and apposite way of seeing. The trite and worn are observed, noted, and overcome. The protagonist emerges from his or her examination content, with a fresh outlook and a mind attuned to both the horror and the glory apparent in the mutable modern world. This is the type of Modernist *bildungsroman*, a novelistic term describing a character's passage of formation and self-discovery, that is exemplified by Stephan Dedalus's journey in Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, by Tietjens in Ford Madox Ford's tetralogy of novels beginning with *Parade's End*, by Mrs. Ramsay in Woolf's *To The Lighthouse*, and by "E. P." in the first section of Pound's "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley".

Like Dipsychus, who feels imprisoned by the dissolute world in which he finds himself — "... [we] make maturer years content / To slave in base compliance to the world" (VIII, 26-27) — "E. P." laments the type of broken-down culture that would make slaves of its young men and sacrifice them for "old men's lies" (IV, 12) and a dying country. Describing the enormous human loss of the First World War, "E. P." reviles his society, labelling it "... an old bitch gone in the teeth, / ... a botched civilisation" (V, 3-4). Both Dipsychus and "E. P." also seek to end the hypocrisy of religion, which they believe to have become, like society in general, degraded. Dipsychus asserts that nowadays "We should not think of Him [God] at all" (IX, 12), while "E. P." includes the substitution of "... the press for wafer" (III, 19) — of a cheap secularisation for Christian communion — among his symbols of a once genuine ritual now ruined and decayed. Both lament the lack of momentum for change in society. Dipsychus describes the new man as a slight and passive figure who "consults columns in a

railway guide" (IX, 110), while "E. P." lambastes those who remain as he once was, who persist in "... maintain[ing] 'the sublime' / In the old sense. Wrong from the start" (I, 3-4). It is these conditions, which exist in both Dipsychus and "E. P." — the ability to recognise much of what is wrong with society — that create their Modernist *estrangement* and pave the way for their eventual clear-sighted and prospective outlook.

In the eleventh scene of "Dipsychus", Dipsychus examines his own growing *estrangement*. "But must I then do violence to myself, / And push on nature, force desire (that's ill), / Because of knowledge" (XI, 26-28), he utters. Here Dipsychus confronts his new "knowledge", his growing awareness of his society's failings and inadequacies, and contemplates the personal destruction that this realisation fosters, the proto-Modernist fragmentation and alienation that must inevitably follow. Dipsychus recognises society's many faults, but may only overcome them by sacrificing himself, his stability and well-being. This prompts Dipsychus to ask "Yet if the occasion coming should find *us* / Undexterous, incapable?" (IX, 64-65). He knows that he must prepare for this *estrangement*, which he sees washing over humanity, but at this stage he does not know how to. By the eleventh scene, however, Dipsychus has the answer: "To use knowledge well we must learn of ignorance: / To apply the rule forget the rule" (XI, 31-32). Dipsychus emerges from the challenge to his sense of self with a fierce desire to change things on his own. He is prepared to discard the base and unworkable in civilisation, to "forget the rule", and construct his own contrary set of precepts. "We have knowledge wiser than our fears" (XIII, 33), Dipsychus states in the final scene. He has sacrificed the stability that accepting the *status quo* brings, but has also found his own way of being. Clough and Dipsychus follow the path familiar to the Modernist author and his or her hero. In "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley", Pound delineates "E. P."s sense of a dawning *estrangement* as follows:

... seeing [that] he had been born
 In a half savage country, out of date;
 Bent resolutely on wringing lilies from the acorn;
 Capaneus; trout for fictitious bait;

(I, 5-8)

Here, "E. P." begins the process of *estrangement* which Dipsychus anticipates. Having once accepted society's conventions — having similarly wrung "lilies from the acorn" — both characters find eventual strength and invention in a new way of "seeing". Each rejects the trite world and attempts, as Pound wrote later, to *Make it New*. "E. P." recognises that "The age demanded an image / Of its accelerated grimace" (II, 1-2), and not "the classics in paraphrase" (II, 8), while Dipsychus wishes to foster his new "knowledge" (XI, 28), his growing awareness of what the modern world must have. However, before insight can be achieved, the courage to search it out must be found.

Towards the end of "Dipsychus", Dipsychus says "What we call sin, / I could believe a painful opening out / Of paths for ampler virtue" (X, 34-36). He accepts that something fresh and vibrant must be substituted for that which is no longer culturally viable, for that which this *estrangement* has displaced. Dipsychus is confident that betterment is within reach:

Howe'er we turn and pause and tremble —
 Howe'er we shrink, deceive, dissemble —
 Whate'er our doubting, grief, disgust,
 The hand is on us, and we must,
 We must, we must.

(XI, 206-210)

We may insert the words "renovate", "succeed" or "overcome" after the phrase "we must". No matter how difficult or painful, some change must be achieved and Dipsychus has the will to make it happen. "E. P.", like Dipsychus, is certain that change is at hand when he bids his ironic farewell to his old self in the final part of "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley", "Envoi". Both Dipsychus and "E. P." seek to overthrow society, and for each of them the ideal position from which to do this is within. Dipsychus asserts that "... one must truck and practise with the world / To gain the 'vantage-ground to assail it from" (XII, 37-38), just as "E. P." initially "Observed the elegance of Circe's hair / Rather than the mottoes on sun-dials" (I, 15-16). He practised society's methods but, once realisation came, chose to destroy them. Just as Dipsychus shouts "Welcome, wicked world" (XI, 82), "E. P." appreciates that he is equally a part of "... a half savage country, out of date" (I, 6). However, once the opportunity for revolution arises, each recognises that he must seize the moment. Action is as much a concern of "E. P." as it is of Dipsychus.

Clough devotes much space in "Dipsychus" to the question of heroism and action. Clough knows that it is these virtues, and these virtues alone, which empower change to take place. In the tenth scene of the poem, Dipsychus finally affirms that "But for this / We ne'er should act at all; and act we must" (X, 159-160). Rejecting the stagnation apparent in modern life, he states:

But I must slave, a meagre coral-worm,
To build beneath the tide with excrement
What one day will be island, or be reef,
And will feed men, or wreck them ...

Action is what one must get

(IX, 142-147)

While Dipsychus is aware that his programme for change may prove ultimately destructive, what may be gained prompts him to push forwards regardless — "Action is what one must get", he quickly confirms. Dipsychus refuses to let the moment of revolution pass. Although he fears "Oh, what and if / E'en now by lingering here I let them [opportunities] slip ... " (IX, 70 -71), evoking the fundamental dichotomy of action and contemplation, Dipsychus is nonetheless committed to a specific course of action — a course of action that is exemplified by the proto-Modernist strain in his poetry. In the same scene, Clough writes (and Dipsychus utters):

And yet,
In dead details to smother vital ends
Which should give life to them; in the deft trick
Of prentice-handling to forget great art,
To base mechanical adroitness yield
The Inspiration and the Hope, a slave!

(IX, 73-78)

Here Dipsychus reveals that it is "great art" — art that is fresh and apposite, that encourages life, that ignores the tired and "mechanical" and rediscovers "Inspiration" — that he is striving for. Throughout the poem, Dipsychus endeavours to act. Here, in the ninth scene, he finally succeeds in articulating precisely what it is that he (and his author) hope to create and enact. The irony is that Clough had been practising what Dipsychus had been preaching the entire time. Through his new proto-Modernist poetic, Clough reveals a revolution which Dipsychus confirms at the poem's end. He asserts that "I can but render what is of my will" (XIII, 26), and this his creator does. The triumph of author and character is clear at the poem's conclusion, when both, addressing the audience as much as the Spirit, cry: "Yet in all things we — 'tis Scripture

too — / Are more than conquerors, even over you" (XIII, 75-76).

In "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley", Pound describes the same theme in the same veiled manner. Like Dipsychus, "E. P." struggles with the need for action and apposition. In the first part of the poem he describes how he was once "Unaffected by 'the march of events'" (I, 17) and was only able to "learn later" (IV, 8) to embrace them. However, finally, in the "Envoi" section of the poem, "E. P." finds what Dipsychus found in the ninth scene of "Dipsychus": "great art". At the start of the poem, "E. P." describes the trite poems that he produced as he attempted "... to maintain 'the sublime'" (I, 3). By "Envoi", however, a new attitude is apparent. Having survived his initial *estrangement*, he displays a fresh inspiration in the ironic lyric with which he closes the poem. The "tawdry cheapness" (III, 11) of the modern artistic object transforms, finally, into both a poem of satiric farewell to "E. P."s immature early years and an indication of his Modernist future. "Envoi" is an example of Modernist irony, a poem written in the Swinburnean manner of Pound's poetic past, but one that is now overwhelmed and obliterated by the Modernist verse forms that surround it. Like Clough through "Dipsychus", Pound in "Hugh Selwyn Mauberley" is able to exemplify the modern artistic programme that he hopes for while, at the same time, describing the process of its discovery and creation. Both poets embed their search for a truth following the collapse, for them, of contemporary civilisation, in characters which at once delineate and reflect the process of Modernist *estrangement* and, later, invention. For Clough, Dipsychus represents the type of modern "everyman" that he feels he is and that he expects will proliferate in society. He invents this figure's form and characteristics in "Dipsychus", approaching one expression of the Modernist hero as he does so. Clough, however, anticipates and formulates others. Just as Dipsychus represents the twentieth-century "everyman", the mythopoeic figure that embodies modern *estrangement*, so

Clough's Spirit embodies the Modernist conception of the total or complete being.

THE SPIRIT

In response to the lack of spiritual and social cohesion apparent in modern life, the Modernist author sought to construct a character that possessed the fixity and wholeness which he or she seemed to be lacking. Overwhelmed by an acute sense of dislocation and *estrangement*, the Modernist writer found in his or her own version of the complete being the ideal to which he or she could aspire. The complete being represented the ultimate human expression of contemporary society, the figure that was perfectly suited to the explosive and unstable modern world. This character was at once a figure of nostalgia for the Modernist writer, a personification of his or her own pre-estranged past, and an emblem of the future, a prophetic image of humanity as it transforms and evolves. The complete being which was presented was so perfectly adapted to the modern social environment because he or she felt equally at home in each of the two spheres which contemporary society polarised. He or she was concomitantly self-contained and speculative, base and mannered, instinctual and cerebral. He or she inhabited both the world of the working class and that of the gentleperson. The complete being's manner was at once hedonistic, crass and lowly, and meditative, urbane and witty. In Modernist literature, this figure is best represented by Leopold Bloom in

Joyce's *Ulysses* or by the later Sweeney in Eliot's "Sweeney Agonistes". The later Sweeney is, as much criticism has noted, an emblem of Eliot's own spiritual redemption. He is a figure of contemptibility and disgust in his earlier incarnation in *Poems 1920*, but is finally, in "Sweeney Agonistes", reconciled with Eliot's conversion to Anglicanism. Sweeney becomes complete as he gathers together both his previous baseness and his redeemed poet-persona.

In the ninth scene of "Dipsychus", Dipsychus wishes that the "love ... / Restorative" which exists in the "total man" were not "... so rare / So doubtful, so exceptional, hard to guess" (IX, 30-34). Dipsychus yearns for the rejuvenating wholeness, and not only in love, which the ideal complete being possesses. Although often repelled by the Spirit, Dipsychus nonetheless cannot resist this figure who embodies confidence and totality for him. The Spirit is the worldly and wise character who firmly contrasts with the estranged Modernist "everyman". Clough makes the Spirit both a symbol of adaptability and coherence, anticipating the ideal Modernist hero, and a foil to Dipsychus's own uncertainty. As with his Modernist equivalent, the Spirit's attraction to the figure of *estrangement* — his ability to exist comfortably in an otherwise shattered society — lies in his coupling of opposites, his ambivalence. In the eleventh scene of "Dipsychus", the Spirit describes his own duality, stating that I am

This worldly fiend that follows you about,
This compound of convention and impiety,
This mongrel of uncleanness and propriety.

(XI, 48-50)

The Spirit provides Dipsychus with the key to his totality, his embodiment of opposites. He exemplifies that ideal Modernist characteristic which Clough anticipates. Like Eliot, who invents a couplet in "Sweeney Agonistes" which summarises the

nature of the Modernist complete being — "Life is death. / I knew a man once did a girl in —" (*Poems* 133) — Clough presents the contradictoriness of the complete Modernist hero. Just as the Spirit is delineated by his reconciliation of differences, so Sweeney, in his collocation of the philosophical in the first line of the couplet and the sordid and terrifying in the second, presents his own dispositional ambivalence, but also his totality. Both are base, on the one hand, and sagacious on the other.

At times the Spirit is, as W.E. Houghton describes him in *The Poetry of Clough*, the "*homme moyen sensuel*" (163). He is physical and sensual, unquestioning and immoral. He is unconcerned with airy-fairy ethical problems of epistemology or theology. His philosophy is plain to see, hedonistic, that of *carpe diem* :

Enjoy the minute,
And the substantial blessings in it;
Ices, *par exemple* ; evening air;
Company, and this handsome square;
Some pretty faces here and there;
Music!

(I, 50-55)

The Spirit's primary concern is the gratification of his senses. He is instinctual, in touch with the primal pleasures available to humanity, as is Eliot's complete being. Sweeney begins the second part of "Sweeney Agonistes" by evoking a series of primal delights. He imagines himself as a savage on a "cannibal isle" (*Poems* 130), eating flesh and fruit, copulating, surrounded by palmtrees and the surf. His philosophy is that of the Spirit: "We're gona sit here and drink this booze / We're gona sit here and have a tune ..." (*Poems* 135), he cries. Both are hedonists, who, because they are complicitous with the worldly pleasures of a dissolute society, are unconcerned with

the hypocrisy or horror to which these gratifications sometimes lead.

Unlike Dipsychus or the estranged Modernist hero, the Spirit and Sweeney are able to embrace the sordid reality of modern society without being overcome or destroyed by it. The Spirit can happily recognise atheism or the secular motivations which drive much religious conformity — in the song which begins "There is no God" (V, 154-185), for example — whereas Dipsychus possesses a much deeper spiritual need that is threatened by any base element to religious belief. The Spirit is comfortable with the hypocrisy which exists in human nature precisely because he knows that it is human nature. He does not suffer from the irreconcilable of ideal thought and degraded action that preoccupies Dipsychus. He is, instead, the embodiment of reconciliation and resolution, completeness. It is the Spirit, of course, who sings: "How pleasant it is to have money, heigh ho!" (IV, 130-235). He is candid, comfortable with the dishonesty, debasement, and even terror, which are inseparable from the world we live in. So too is Sweeney. In the "Fragment of an Agon" Sweeney describes how he helped a man to dispose of the body of a woman that he had killed. He tells how they submerged the woman in a bath of "lysol" to hasten her decomposition. Sweeney embraces the capacity for savagery latent within himself, and any one of us, here, and when he writes that:

Any man might do a girl in
Any man has to, needs to, wants to
Once in a lifetime, do a girl in.

(*Poems* 134)

While the Spirit never goes so far, both recognise the darkness that lies beneath the veneer of civilisation and are able to accept it as an inevitable part of any imperfect human structure. For them society is not constructed as a constant

and unbreakable ideal, but is characterised by incidents of baseness, hypocrisy and nastiness. This attitude alone marks their social debasement as something more than mere candour or immorality. Both the Spirit and Sweeney, as literary expressions of the perfect Modernist being, possess a philosophical element that makes them complete, ideal; that makes them objects of envy for a creature such as Dipsychus.

Throughout "Dipsychus", the Spirit tries to convince Dipsychus of the true value of society. He is not simply the evil tempter; he is also the sage attempting to bestow some of his wisdom on his less worldly companion: "You think I'm anxious to allure you — / My object is much more to cure you" (IIA, 18-19), he says in the second scene. The Spirit wishes to show Dipsychus that life is to be embraced, lived, not ruined with fear and worry. The Spirit distills the reasons for the life that we are given from his own experience, finding true meaning in the capacity for joy which we all possess. As the emblematic complete being, the Spirit is able to find this joy in matters both worldly and meditative. In the eleventh scene of the poem, the Spirit appeals:

'Tis time you learn
 The Second Reverence, for things around.
 Up, then, and go amongst them: don't be timid;
 Look at them quietly a bit: by-and-by
 Respect will come, and healthy appetite

 Why will you walk about thus with your eyes shut,
 Treating for facts the self-made hues that float
 On tight-pressed pupils, which you know are not facts?

(XI, 115-126)

The Spirit wishes to foster an "appetite" for life, both internal and external, which makes us spiritually "healthy" and whole. Dipsychus's ability to taint life with his own misguided ideals

is dismissed by the Spirit, who displays a far greater capacity for contemplation and analysis. The Spirit is both wise and perceptive, and studious and intelligent. Not only does he embrace the complete being's dichotomy of baseness and gentility, but he also personifies both real, inner sagacity, and bookish learning. We receive from the Spirit many allusions to Scripture, Classics, philosophy. He reconciles a great wisdom with a superficial knowledge that is exemplified by his statement: "Give me your Eighteenth Century for high breeding" (III, 102). Sweeney, in Eliot's "Sweeney Agonistes", represents something similar.

Not only is Sweeney savage and base, he is also intelligent and philosophical. Sweeney's precepts, like those of the Spirit, encompass a joy in life that is tempered by an awareness of its hardship and brevity. Both realise, however, that life may be made manageable and happy if we embrace its variance and accept the totality of its experience. Sweeney exemplifies this completeness when he says:

Birth, and copulation, and death.
That's all the facts when you come to brass tacks:
Birth, and copulation, and death.

(*Poems* 131)

Sweeney, articulating the three primal acts on which life depends, reflects his own symbolic totality in his brief encapsulation of existence. Here, what is essential to life is prefigured by Sweeney in a phrase which probes the finite limits of our being. Sweeney is associated with a deep and mysterious wisdom both earlier, and when he says that "I've been born, and once is enough. / You don't remember, but I remember ..." (*Poems* 131). Enigmatically, Sweeney is able to recall the moment of his birth. Like the Spirit's, Sweeney's knowledge is far greater than our own. He is both mystical and learned; he alludes to Oriental reincarnation at the same

time as he reveals his deeper understanding. The Spirit and Sweeney possess both a baseness and a sagacity that contrast with those whom they address, and that delineate them as perfect Modernist bodies. Just as Dipsychus and Mauberley embody dislocation and *estrangement*, so the Spirit and Sweeney represent a confidence and totality, an adaptability, to which the others aspire. They are as comfortable in the modern world as Dipsychus and "E. P." are troubled by it. Clough anticipates the figure of Modernist triumph, creating him, like the Modernist author, as a means of symbolically remedying the proliferating sense of alienation in society. Neither the Spirit nor Sweeney suffers from an overwhelming sense of isolation or removal, as Dipsychus and "E. P." do. Instead, they thrive on the mutable nature of the modern world.

CLAUDE

Claude from "Amours de Voyage" represents yet another Modernist archetype in Clough's poetry. While Claude has often been associated with the particularly Byronic anti-hero — the selfish and troubled Romantic of "Don Juan" or "Childe Harold", for example — he can also be seen to presage the specific figure of the anti-hero found in Modernist literature. He is "neither the 'Great Man' nor the romantic rebel, but the man or woman in any walk of life", as Auden writes of the Modernist protagonist in *The Dyer's Hand* (84). Like the Romantic or Victorian anti-hero, the Modernist equivalent pretends some disaffection with society. He, and the anti-hero is almost exclusively male, suffers firstly from a disillusionment with the institutions of his civilisation. His intuitive mind and suspicious temper prompt him to question deeply the conventions of his society. He finds that it appears to lack the moral value or political ideal for which one might willingly lay down one's life. It exists in a state of perpetual debasement and hypocrisy that destroys any possible conception of the valiant or worthwhile death. The conclusion is drawn that there is no cause which justifies sacrificing one's life. The individual does not exist who is so unique, so untainted by civilisation, that one might willingly die for him or her. However, while the Romantic or Victorian anti-hero is generally an individual, beyond society, the Modernist anti-hero is seen to manifest a broader social reality. All characters in the Modernist landscape, including the complete being, are in some way anti-heroes; it is the only option left open to those who inhabit the despoliated modern world. The Modernist anti-hero is the final emblem of the collapse of

secular Humanist culture and society. In Claude, Clough anticipates the type of anti-hero — the personal exemplar of specific and widespread social decay — that is found in Modernist literature.

Having previously examined the character of the anti-hero in one of his shorter poems, "To think that men of former days", in "Amours de Voyage" Clough undertakes a more protracted study of this theme. The protagonist of "Amours de Voyage" is constructed as the obviously unheroic man. His appearance is uninspiring, his voice insipid. His tone is often awkward, uncertain. Claude is the embodiment of modern apathy, fear and indecision. The extent of his disillusionment with society is exemplified by the degree to which he is removed from it. An Englishman, he languishes alone in Italy. His most meaningful human interaction is seen in the letters that he writes. These letters exemplify a mode of communication which separates him by many days and thousands of miles from any real human contact. Claude's lethargy grows, like Dipsychus's, from an unhealthy preoccupation with the failings of his society, from an inscrutable idealism that is unable to be sustained. Clough anticipates, in many ways, T. S. Eliot's versions of the Modernist anti-hero. While J. Alfred Prufrock is perhaps the most obvious example of this figure in the Eliotean canon, it is to the three embodiments of social decay in "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar" that this study will turn. While Eliot betrays a dual purpose in this poem — he seeks both to describe the modern anti-hero and to equate this figure with his own jaundiced view of Jewishness — his anti-Semitism is here primarily an expression of a wider concern for social decline. Burbank, Bleistein, and Klein each personify modern humanity's greater degradation.

Like Claude, Bleistein is physically diminutive. Both characters purposefully contrast with the conventional appearance of the hero — imposing, powerful, handsome — that is emblematised by the historical significance of Rome in

"Amours de Voyage" and by "the God Hercules" (7) in "Burbank with a Baedeker ...". Just as Claude is presented as small, isolated, "shrink[ing to] ... adapt" (I, 35), so Bleistein is characterised by "A saggy bending of the knees / And elbows, with the palms turned out" (13-14). Bleistein's bent knees decrease his stature; his upturned palms illustrate his difficult and covetous nature. This characteristic is equally applicable to Claude. As Claude is sullen, dejected — pallid like Italian stucco — so Bleistein languishes, "lustreless" (17) and without energy. Like Claude, who is without any meaningful human contact, Bleistein is trapped in a society of trivial conversation and irrelevant social convention. His world is that of "laughter [that] tinkled among the teacups", as Eliot writes earlier in "Mr. Apollinax" (2). Both figures physically embody an anti-heroism that is reinforced by their subsequent actions.

In the second Canto of "Amours de Voyage", Claude ponders his lack of heroic will:

Now supposing the French or the Neapolitan soldier
Should by some evil chance come exploring the Maison
Serny
(Where the family English are all to assemble for safety),
Am I prepared to lay down my life for the British female?

(II, 65-68)

Claude eventually concludes that he is not. In such a degraded society, he finds that chivalry is dead. Rather than die for the sake of his countrywomen, Claude prefers to save himself. He exemplifies the character of the isolated Modernist self that Clough presages and curiously examines, but earlier, in "In the Great Metropolis", vehemently scorns:

Each for himself is still the rule,
We learn it when we go to school —
The devil take the hindmost, o!

(1-3)

Claude represents the new type of man, the modern anti-hero. He is weaker, less committed, more selfish and pathetic than his forebears. In "Amours de Voyage", it is rather the women who possess all of the strength. The letters of Mary and Georgina Trevellyn provide a significant contrast to those of Claude. While the latter is full of fear, trepidation, self-doubt and cowardice, the Trevellyns adapt quickly and easily to the threat posed by French invasion. They embody a resilience, whether formulated by ignorance of the real danger or inherent to them, which Claude lacks. In the topsy-turvy modern world it is the woman who emerges as the most powerful figure. The decline of the classical hero is seen in the way in which the modern male is superseded — made redundant; emasculated, humiliated — by the creation of the pragmatic woman.

This motif is also evident in Eliot's "Burbank with a Baedeker: Bleistein with a Cigar". Here Burbank is pictured as follows:

Burbank crossed a little bridge
 Descending at a small hotel;
 Princess Volupine arrived,
 They were together, and he fell.

(1-4)

When compared, it is the male who falters. The woman remains upright, strong, while the male falls, crumbles. Like Claude, Burbank is a shrunken image of the former hero. Both not only reject the heroic ethos, they embody mankind's demise as they do so. Like the women of "Amours de Voyage", Volupine is more than capable. She ascends "the waterstair" (27) whereas Burbank is unable even to stand up straight.

Just as Burbank describes anti-heroism when he says "Who clipped the lion's wings / And flea'd his rump and pared his claws?", so Claude finds amongst the remnants of classical Rome only tumbling stone and marble facade. Both see the age of heroes wane and a period of cowardice and lethargy replace it. Their preoccupation with heroism is not so much nostalgia as a pure disbelief at sacrifice, so far has modern man fallen. Claude is concerned only for "that / Precious creature, himself" (II, 36-37), while Bleistein "Stares from the protozoic slime" (18) that is his selfish and superficial existence. In both cases, Claude and Bleistein reflect the collapse of society and the growth of alienation and the individual consciousness.

Always, the anti-hero is born from an irreparable disaffection with society. Both Claude and Eliot's anti-heroes derive their weakness and selfishness from a feeling that society no longer welcomes them. In a society in which one is always separated from any another, death for community or government seems pointless. Claude betrays his sardonic disregard for mass sacrifice when he writes that:

Dulce it is, and *decorum*, no doubt, for the country to fall,
— to
Offer one's blood an oblation to Freedom, and die for
the Cause.

(II, 32-33)

Subverting the heroic Latin maxim *dulce et decorum est*, Claude conveys his dissatisfaction with his civilisation. Elsewhere, in Canto II, lines 75-78 and 150-157, Claude continues to reject martyrdom and promote the freedom of the individual: "I have not felt the vocation", he writes (II, 78). Claude sees his society decline, embodying the self-serving response of the modern alienated individual as he does so. Eliot's three embodiments of anti-heroism exemplify

something similar. Having pondered modern humanity's lack of heroism, Burbank, at the end of the poem, says that he has been "meditating on / Time's ruins" (31-32). Burbank, Bleistein, and "Burbank with a Beideker: Bleistein with a Cigar"'s third anti-hero, Sir Ferdinand Klein, each exemplify an irrecoverable social decay. In their mercantile greed, personal selfishness and physical repugnance, these characters present a compound symbol of the fallen modern male. With Claude, Clough anticipates a typical representation of the twentieth-century man, a man for whom heroism is undesirable if not impossible. Claude is as much a symbol of Modernist individualism, as he is of any Romantic form of anti-heroism. Rather than define an existing archetype, Claude looks forward to a world in which very little conception of honour or duty exists, where selfishness and alienation reign. Like Bleistein, who sees that "The smoky candle end of time / Declines" (20-21), Claude witnesses the death of heroism and embraces the baseness of life as his only way of surviving it.

Throughout his life, Clough was aware of the masks that the self could wear. In his poetry, he not only described these, he drew them. Just as his conception of something approaching the unconscious allows him to trace the roots of a personal isolation that reflects Modernist, rather than Victorian, alienation, so his anticipation of the figure of the modern self allows him to presage many of the forms that he or she took in Modernist literature. In this way, Dipsychus becomes the estranged Modernist "everyman", and his nemesis, the Spirit, becomes the embodiment of twentieth-century human desire, the ideal and complete being. In "Amours de Voyage" too, Clough invents an anti-hero, Claude, who is every bit as Modernist as some of Eliot's anti-heroes. The perceived uncertainty which many critics have found in the work of Clough in fact reflects both his anticipation of the upset state of the Modernist alienated self, and his refusal to gloss the cracks in civilisation with a lacquer of trite ideas and revertive observations. Clough embraces the despoliated

modern world at his own peril, but finds it a more real and rewarding place than any of the fantasy worlds of Victorian literature. While the world that is carefully revealed beneath the surface of "Natura Naturans" is not a welcome one, it remains one that is both more real and authentic than many that were posited at the same time.

Conclusion

The line of argument which this study has followed is both simple and clear. We have firstly, and again frequently throughout this study, witnessed Clough's dissatisfaction with the social and poetic precepts which Victorian convention enforces. In poems such as those which prefigure the thesis proper this pattern has been established. We have repeatedly seen Clough lament the heedlessness and destruction with which the Victorian period chooses to express itself politically, and the reversion and conformity with which it expresses itself poetically. In the initial chapter of this thesis Clough's philosophical and poetic dissension from Victorian custom has been evinced by the almost entirely adverse critical reception which his poetry, and biography, received in their own time. His verse, this study has suggested, precluded, in the unique poetic processes which it exercised, understanding and empathy from its traditional Victorian audience. Clough's poetry was consequently dismissed and the man harshly mistreated. In the anticipation of Modernism which the Clough critics of the 1930s began to associate with the poet, however, appeared a clue, but by no means a satisfactory solution, to the problem of Clough's difference. By seeking to eliminate the conventional biographical image of Clough which persisted, and to extend the definition of his Modernism which was created, this thesis has itself sought to move closer to a

possible satisfactory solution and thus make space for a clearer, more profound view of Clough's proto-Modernism as it does so. As we have seen, my initial chapter functions as a gateway through which we must pass if we are to empower ourselves, subsequently, to eliminate the prejudices which colour Clough's poetry and hypostases.

In each chapter after my first the primary constituent elements of Modernism have, for the first time in Clough scholarship that I am aware of, been deduced from a wide variety of relevant texts. These have then been compared with those elements — philosophical, mechanical, thematic — which frequently appear in Clough's writings. The application of the precepts and techniques of Modernism to Clough and his writings has repeatedly revealed a number of fresh, significant and striking convergences. We have taken the points at which his work most obviously meets with, and anticipates, that of the Modernists and then sought to examine in greater detail the means by which it does this. By applying, as precisely and accurately as is possible, what is meant by the term Modernism we have enabled ourselves to transcend the limitations of previous criticism and unearth the most important of Clough's proto-Modernist traits.

In so doing we have seen, in my second chapter, how Clough presages the definitive, and ambivalent, Modernist attitude to the past. He seeks to rejuvenate the present by destroying the conventions of the immediate past, and, simultaneously, to borrow from, and remake, the more distant past in order to achieve this. This, in turn, leads him to approach several important aspects of the Modernist poetic. Clough, quite unusually in the Victorian period, invents a particularly powerful mode of satire with which he, like the Modernists, may accomplish the first of his renovative aims. By attacking the precepts of his society Clough hopes to encourage their physical collapse. In anticipating the variance and eclecticism, and, more significantly, the underlying pattern of referential structures implicit in Eliot's definition of

the "mythical method", Clough also presages the most successful means of accomplishing the second of his goals, that of appropriating the wealth of the positive past as a means of remaking the present. Here we can also see Clough, as he throughout continues, refuse the public rhetoric that is characteristic of much Victorian verse and begin to create the proto-Modernist, subjective and "writerly" text.

Clough, however, as my third chapter has shown, does not anticipate this aspect of the Modernist poetic only. In examining Clough's literary theory we have seen that he, rejecting Romantic and Victorian excess, desires precision in form and content. Both Clough and the Modernists seek an organic formal arrangement that reflects the modern world; both demand a text that is founded upon the exact image, and both require hardness and concision in all expression. This wish for poetic exactness has then been exemplified in the second part of this chapter. Clough's creation of narrative form from a succession of precise images, his embedding within each of these images of a deep, often private symbolism — that is, his "objective correlative" — his retreat into the displaced and introjective world of the alienated individual, and his invention of the disjointed and mutable modern verse form all anticipate the Modernist poetic. The penultimate convergence — Clough's poetic introversion — is also a pointer, as we will have realised, to the subject of the final chapter.

Here, we have contrasted the Victorian and Modernist conceptions of selfhood and alienation and noted how, in his anticipation of something akin to Modernist *estrangement* and in his recognition of an "inner world" that closely resembles that of Freudian psycho-analysis, Clough develops a premature sense of the modern, isolated and imperilled self. This we have seen expressed in such poems as "Blank misgivings ..." and "Natura Naturans", and we have observed how, in turn, this awareness has led him to anticipate each of several Modernist character archetypes. Repeatedly depicting a selfhood that is both evanescent and shifting, Clough

presages the estranged Modernist "everyman", the desirable complete being, and the debased modern anti-hero. He senses the collapse of identity which Modernism later describes and begins, prematurely, to record it.

Throughout his poetry Clough celebrates the textual freedom that his rejection of post-Romanticism, together with his anticipation of Modernism, allows. Through innovation, experimentation, decreation and recreation, Clough enables himself to challenge the conventions of Victorian art and society. He empowers change and rebellion in the concomitant processes of poetic erosion and transformation which he enacts. By refusing to subscribe to Victorian poetic custom, and by living a life that his peers felt was unconventional, Clough asserts both his difference and his dissatisfaction. He exemplifies modern individualism, but, at the same time, Modernist isolation. Anticipating the ambivalence with which the Modernists repeatedly expressed themselves, he desires community but also embodies independence. In his poetry, he longs to *Make it New* but also hopes to preserve the Humanist project for which he and his contemporaries strove; each simply has different ways of doing this. Clough welcomes change, but, like his hero Dipsychus, suffers from the "pang, remorselike" (X, 45) which change enforces. In his incorporation of the metafiction of proto-Modernism we see Clough's farewell to the stability afforded by the Victorian poetic, but also his desire to embrace the potential of the new.

End Notes

1. The 1850s see the tentative beginnings of an artistic impulse that can be described as early, anticipatory, or, as I prefer, proto-Modernism. The publication of the first edition of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* in the United States and of Robert Browning's *Men and Women* in England, both in 1855, and of Charles Baudelaire's *Flowers of Evil* in France in 1857, can be seen as the three texts which most obviously herald the advent of proto-Modernism in Western literature. Throughout the century, and in Baudelaire's compatriot Symbolists — Rimbaud, Laforgue, Mallarmé —, the playwrights Ibsen and Strindberg, and philosophers such as Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, we can begin to chart the path of literary Modernism towards its twentieth-century maturity. Clough is part of this impulse in his native England, and, like Whitman, Browning and Baudelaire, he undertakes a poetic project in the 1850s — represented most notably by "Amours de Voyage" and "Dipsychus" — which establishes his position among the proto-Modernist "avant garde". This impulse occurred simultaneously throughout Western civilisation and with very little communication between the relevant cultural centres. While it is tempting to suggest that Clough discovered the proto-Modernist poetic while in France or

America — he visited each place a number of times — this remains unlikely.

2. Entitled *The Bothie of Tober-na-Fuosich* on first publication in 1848, the poem's title was altered to *The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich* for inclusion in the 1869 edition of *The Poems and Prose Remains of Arthur Hugh Clough*. The later is generally preferred in criticism, and it is to the later that I will refer throughout my study.
3. Richard Bartlett, in his book *The New Country*, examines the nature of the European settler colony. Here he describes the United States as possessing a typically confident and extraspective national vision, one which derives both from the puritanical, resilient and pioneering character of its inhabitants and from their geographical isolation from Europe and its culture.
4. Christian doubt is a common concern in Victorian literature. Arnold explores this theme most pointedly in "Empedocles on Etna" and, later, in "Stanzas from the Grand Chartreuse". In both poems Arnold seeks to reconcile the industrial and commercial spirit of the modern age with a disappearing and deeper spiritualism. Even Gerard Manley Hopkins, a Jesuit priest, describes suffering from periods of doubt in a series of poems known as "the terrible sonnets".
5. For more information, see Dorothy Deering's very illuminating comparison of the poetic praxes of both men in "The Antithetical Poetics of Arnold and Clough". She does not attempt to elevate one man above the other, as some critics have done, but objectively contrasts their respective poetic viewpoints in a very profound and fair way.

6. While most contemporary reviewers of Clough were universally negative and reproachful, a small group of positive Victorian critics did exist. Of these Walter Bagehot and R. H. Hutton were the most notable. Bagehot, for example, wrote that many of Clough's poems are "very remarkable for true vigour and artistic excellence" (2 259). This was, quite exceptionally, written in 1862. Bagehot and Hutton exemplify a dissenting voice in Clough criticism, but one which begins to gain support after about 1930 and with the advent of Modernism.

7. Clough's already diminished popularity suffered a tremendous blow with the new century. Walter Houghton notes, on page 21 of his book on Clough, that the thirteen reprintings of the poet which Macmillan undertook between 1870 and 1900 fell to just two in the fifty years up until 1950. Of these, one was printed in 1903 and the other in 1909. That Oxford University Press was in almost constant production of the works of Arnold at the same time provides an interesting and significant contrast.

8. In arriving at my definition of Modernism I have consulted a number of relevant books, all of which are detailed in my bibliography. While I have included such seminal works on Modernism as Auden's essays collected in *The Dyer's Hand*, most of my information derives from works no more than twenty years old and one third come from the last decade. I have done this so that my view of Modernism remains up-to-date and my denotation of this ceaselessly difficult and contentious term is as accurate as possible. It is to the primary source — the literary theory of the Modernists themselves — however, that I have repeatedly turned for my definitions of Modernism.

9. For Harold Bloom's ideas regarding the process of engagement with the literary past and the establishment of identity within the body of that past, that is the canon, see *Agon: Towards a Theory of Revisionism*.
10. Ezra Pound coins the phrase *Make it New* as the title for a collection of essays published in 1934. It has subsequently been appropriated by criticism as a perfect and succinct description of the Modernist endeavour, and it is in this way that I use it throughout my thesis.
11. In *Arthur Hugh Clough: The Growth of a Poet's Mind*, Evelyn Greenburger describes the strongly held political beliefs which underpin Clough's poetry. Her descriptions of Clough's ideological radicalism are an excellent counterpart to my delineation of Clough's poetic radicalism.
12. Clough began "Dipsychus" while holidaying in Venice in the summer of 1850. The inspiration, for him, was immediate. Because the poem was never completed, its composition can be argued to have been almost impossible without the physical presence of the city. Clough returned to Venice again in 1860, but by this time his health was failing and he died the following February in Florence.
13. Just as Horace is inseparable from Venice for Clough, as evinced by his place in the prologue of "Dipsychus", so too, significantly, is he for Proust. In the translations and notes collected in *On Reading Ruskin*, Proust, paraphrasing the words of his revered subject, writes that in Venice "the faith of Horace in the spirit of the Fountain of Brundisium, in the faun of his hillside, and in the protection of the greater gods is constant, vital and practical" (80). For both Clough and Proust, Horace is an

eternal symbol of beauty, grandeur and an almost spiritual communion with place. For both, it is Venice that prompts this unique sense of communion.

14. For more information on Clough's attitude to his Romantic antecedents, see William B. Thesing's very interesting article entitled "'Harvesting the Past': Arthur Hugh Clough's Estimates of his Romantic Predecessors".

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